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THE

MYSTERY OF GODLINESS,

Consider'd in

LXI. SERMONS.

WHEREIN

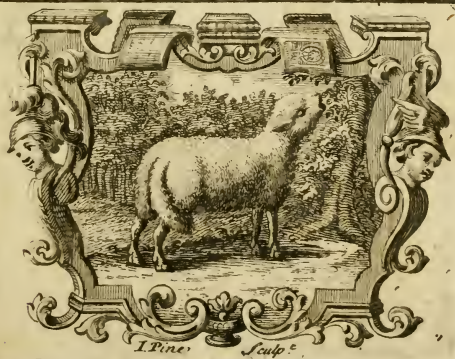
The DEITY of CHRIST is prov'd upon no other Evidence than the *Word of GOD*, and with no other View than for the *Salvation of Men.*

In Two VOLUMES.

By *THOMAS BRADBURY.*

Jer. xv. 15, 16. *Know that for* THY SAKE *I have suffer'd Rebuke. Thy Words were found, and I did eat them, and thy Word was unto me the Joy and Rejoicing of my Heart, for I am called by* THY NAME, *O Lord God of Hosts.*

VOL. II.



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SERMON XXXII.

July 19, 1719.

1 TIM. III. 16.

——Believ'd on in the world.

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THESE words carry our thoughts into the *fifth* branch of the Christian Religion, or, as the Apostle calls it, *the record that God has given of his Son.* 1 Joh. v. 10. And it's like all the rest, a mystery of godliness, that God should be *manifest in the flesh*; and after all the scandal that he met with there, *justified in the Spirit.* That when he was refus'd of men, he should be *seen of Angels*; and upon the contradiction of the *Jews*, *preach'd unto the Gentiles*: and this so very effectual to their advantage, and his reputation, that he is *believ'd on in the world.* I shall here proceed by that method which I have observ'd all along in the other parts of this glorious subject; that is,

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1. Shew you the ſenſe of the phraſe, or what it is for the world to *believe on Chriſt.*

2. Open this as an argument of his true Divinity; that He who is ſo believ'd on can be no other than the moſt High GOD.

3. Conſider it as a *myſtery*, that bears a place among thoſe many things that are too wonderful for us; ſuch as are high, and we cannot attain unto.

4. Let you ſee the benefit of ſuch a doctrine: it is a myſtery of *godlineſs*, and helps on the religion that ought to be our concern and practice.

I. We muſt enquire what is farther ſaid of Him, concerning whom we have heard ſo much already: and the branch that I am now upon gives us *glad tydings* indeed. They tell us of a *glory to God in the higheſt*; they introduce a *peace upon earth*, and proclaim a *good will towards men.* We have heard before that he was preach'd unto the Gentiles, among people who ſought him not, and were *not call'd by his name*, but continu'd *without Chriſt* for ſeveral generations, *ſtrangers and foreigners.* Now, it is a natural enquiry, To what purpoſe is the report carried among the Gentiles, which had ſo little influence on the *Jews?* Is Chriſt any gainer in his revenue, or they in their ſalvation? What's the advantage of it? We may anſwer, much every way, becauſe he was *believ'd on in the world.*

Luke ii. 14.

Iſa. lxv. 1. Eph. ii. 14.

This part of our religion tallies exactly to the other, that we were laſt upon. There's no proportion between his being *manifeſt in the fleſh*, and *juſtified in the Spirit.* Thouſands ſaw him, and heard him, to whom the Spirit gave no ſuch teſtimony. The witneſſes to his incarnation were Saints and ſinners, *Jews* and *Greeks*, good and bad, friends and enemies. *Jeſus of Nazareth was a man approv'd of God among 'em by ſigns and miracles, which God did by him in the midſt of them, as they themſelves alſo*

Acts ii. 22.

also knew. But when he is justified, admir'd, approv'd of, and heartily chosen, this was only done by those to whom the Spirit had glorified him. Now, tho' there's no proportion between his being manifest and his being justified; yet there's something that looks like it between the *fourth* and *fifth* branches of our religion. His being preach'd unto the Gentiles is answer'd by this, that he was believ'd on in the world. Not but that several would hear the former, who are eternal strangers to the latter; for *death and destruction say, We have heard the fame of him with our ears.* SERM. XXXII.

But there's a harmony between these parts of the Christian Doctrine in two particulars. *First,* the success or result of his being *preach'd* is, that he is *believ'd on.* To this end did he receive gifts for men, and *gave some Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers.* And, *Secondly,* the place where this attempt was made, is that where no such event could be expected: he is preach'd *among the Gentiles*; those parts where grace and revelation had employ'd no culture; the unprepar'd regions of the earth. Well, he is believ'd on *in the world,* in these unlikely countries. As the day-star had arisen upon the people that sat in darkness and saw no light, so it did not shine out in vain, but made known to 'em *a salvation by the remission of their sins, thro' the tender mercy of our God, and guided their feet into the way of peace.* In opening out this head of Divinity, I shall observe both the things now mention'd. Luke i. 78, 79.

1. What it is for any people to *believe* on Christ.

2. That thus he was believ'd on *in the world.*

1. What is it for him to be *believ'd on?* you know this is a word of great repute in the new Testament, and very often expresses the whole of our religion, as it takes in both the duty and the

SERM. XXXII. expectation of a Christian. And tho' sometimes it signifies only a bare assent to the truth of what he said, yet the more usual meaning is of a greater latitude. It may be consider'd several ways.

As regarding the *doctrine* that Christ has reveal'd, there believing is being satisfied that it's all true. As regarding his *Person*, there believing is closing with him as the anointed of God. In respect to our *hope*, believing is that dependence by which we receive the benefits that he gives, and wait for those that he has promis'd. With respect to our *duty*, believing goes out into life and practice. It bears all these interpretations in the book of God. And as in our text we are call'd to consider the success of his Gospel among the Gentiles, so when it is said he was *believ'd on in the world*, I think we may take the expression in its whole latitude, and you will find that they who do indeed believe on Him, may have the following characters affirm'd of them.

They receive the *testimony* that he has given of himself: they look upon him as the only *Saviour* of a lost race: they rely upon the *righteousness* that he has brought in for their acceptance with God: they derive from his *fulness* the graces of the holy Spirit: they *increase* in the life of God by supplies from Him: they regard him as their great *Comforter* in every time of need: they *obey* him in all manner of conversation; in particular, they live in the acts of religious *worship* to him: they trust in him for a *protection* to the end of life: they look to him as the *Finisher* of their faith. All these things go by the name of believing: and tho' a good man may not have 'em in an equal evidence, yet there's such a connection among 'em, that where there's one, there are all.

(1.) I begin with that which seems to be the lowest act of faith: and that is receiving the testimony

ny he has given of himself; believing that *his doctrine is of God*, that it came from above. This takes in not only what he said in Person to his disciples, whom he had chosen, but what he has since told 'em by the holy Ghost, and with which revelations he has completed the rule of faith and hope. So that no man can make any additions to the words of the prophecy of this book: he has *seal'd up the sayings*. Believing in this case is depending upon the authority of the Scriptures, that they are given by *inspiration of God, and that by them the man of God may be perfect, thorowly furnish'd to every good work*. He that sets up any other rule besides the Bible either for our practice or comfort, is no believer; because in the revelation that a Saviour gives of himself, he has struck off our regard from every one else. Our faith is never to *stand in the wisdom of men*. SERM. XXXII. 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. 1 Cor. ii. 5.

And, "whatever insinuations are given about, "there's nothing that my soul does more abhor, "than to set up the decrees of men as the grounds "of believing." That's rather to deny the faith than to promote it. We don't believe in creeds, catechisms, and confessions, much less in those persons who compil'd 'em. All the profession that can be made upon these heads is, that we take the doctrine as it is there expres's'd, to agree with the revelation contain'd in the Scriptures: *We write no other things unto you, than what you read and acknowledge, and I trust you shall acknowledge even to the end. Evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceiv'd:* in opposition to whom, *we continue in the things that we have learn'd and been assur'd of, knowing of whom we have learn'd 'em; and that from children we have known the Scriptures, which are able to make us wise to salvation, thro' faith which is in Christ Jesus.* 2 Cor. i. 13. 2 Tim. iii. 13, 14, 15.

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You may think that such a believing as this is no great matter: that we grow into it by time; 'tis only the manufacture of education, and is establish'd by the laws of the country. And indeed if we are believers to no other purpose than this, it's far from being the faith I am speaking of. But nevertheless, the Scripture has plac'd our receiving the testimony of Christ Jesus a great deal higher than some are apt to imagine. What a noble account does *John the Baptist* give of such a believer? What Christ *had seen and heard, that he declar'd; and——he that receiv'd his testimony has set to his seal that God is true.* He has given a sort of assurance to all the promises that are upon record. He is a voucher to the Divine faithfulness in the midst of an unbelieving world; and therefore our Saviour makes it no small matter to be *receiv'd* even in this sense: *We speak that we do know, and testifie that we have seen, and ye receive not our witness.* His enemies came with a snare, if not with a scorn, saying, *Master, we know thou art righteous, and teacheſt the way of God in truth.* But it's what they were not satisfied in, tho', as he saith, none could convince him of evil.

Joh. iii. 32, 33.

ver. 11.

And indeed there's a great difference between a man's being able to run down the evidence that's given of the Christian religion, and his receiving *the love of that truth.* Many a one dare not deny it, who yet cannot be said to believe it. We read of some *Jews who believ'd on him*, of whom he saith afterwards, *Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: ——because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not: none of you convinces me of sin, and if I say the truth, why don't ye believe me? He that is of God, hears God's words: ye therefore hear 'em not, because ye are not of God.* I am apt to think it is with reveal'd religion as it is with natural. There are thousands who cannot

Joh. viii. 31, 44, 45, 46, 47.

get

get over the arguments they meet with for the being of a God, and yet are fools enough to *say in their hearts there is no God. Their minds and consciences are defil'd: they profess that they know God, but in works they deny him; being abominable, disobedient, and to every good work reprobate.* When these people are converted, their believing is to quite another purpose; which shews it to be from quite another principle. Just so it is with the authority of Christ in the things that he has said of himself: Tho' a person may not know how to dispute against 'em, yet there's a great deal more goes to a thorow conviction.

Ps. xiv. 1. Tit. i. 15, 16.

When our Saviour had sent the disciples of *John* back to their master, with that which would confirm *him*, and might persuade *them*, that *the dead are rais'd, the deaf hear, the blind see, the lame walk, and the lepers are cleans'd*, he adds, *Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me*; *q. d.* notwithstanding all the evidence that makes you converts, yet the work must be ascrib'd to a Divine power as well as a moving argument; for that which abundantly satisfies you, will be of no weight to millions of other people. We may complain, after all our pains, to establish a doctrine that's call'd the wisdom of God, *Who has believ'd our report!* people rather take the Christian religion for granted, than look into it; and the consequence of this is, that they will be *carried away with every wind of doctrine.* Tho' the ministration of the Spirit is glorious, tho' they who are employ'd in it use *great plainness of speech*, tho' they renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, *not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of the Lord deceitfully, but by manifestation of the* truth, commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God; yet after all this, *Our Gospel is hid, and many are lost.* We have need therefore not only to look into the

Mat. xi. 5, 6.

Isa. liii. 1.

2 Cor. iv. 2, 3, 4.

SERM. XXXII. book of God, but at the time of doing it, to waft up the same desire with *David, Lord, open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wonders out of thy law.* And there's the more occasion for this, when *the God of this world has blinded the eyes of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of the invisible God, should shine into their hearts.*

What is it that makes a believer, and gives him a right persuasion, that the testimony we have of Jesus Christ is true? I answer, there is a great deal of what we call *moral evidence.* We have a consistence in the parts, a harmony in the whole, a strain of piety running thro', and a demonstration of miracles bearing witness. But all this will not ver. 6. do, till *He who caus'd the light to shine out of darkness, shines into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.* *Peter* told our Lord what men said of him: some that he was *Elias*, some *John the Baptist*, others that one of the old prophets was risen again. All the opinions proclaim'd him to be a wonderful person: and had he been any of these, no manner of doubt, *mighty works would have shewn themselves in him.* I cannot say, but that one rais'd from the dead might have been able to do as many miracles. But this was not believing him to be what he really was. Tho' in these imaginations they suppos'd a great deal, yet not enough.

Now the question is, upon what grounds any could say, he was more than a prophet return'd into the world, and no less than the Christ of God? Our Saviour saith to him, *Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, flesh and blood has not reveal'd this to thee, but my Father who is in heaven.* Flesh and blood, *i. e.* human reason, employ'd upon these observations, might prove him to be more than a man; but here's another evidence given to him, that can proceed

ceed from none but God. Well, thus he was believ'd on in the world; his Gospel was approv'd of. The word that they heard of the Apostles, was *not receiv'd as the word of man, but as it is in truth the word of the living God, that works effectually in those that believe.* He takes notice of this to the *Thessalonians: Our testimony among you was believ'd.* This is the ground of all: we do well to *take heed to the sure word of prophecy:* if we cease to take heed to that, no doctrines of the Christian revelation will ever impress us. They are recommended to us, as not coming *by the will of man, but that holy men of God spake as they were mov'd by the holy Ghost.*

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1 Thes. ii. 13.

2 Pet. i. 19, 20, 21.

(2.) They that believe on Christ, look upon him as *the only Saviour* of a lost world. This was the great matter of his testimony, when the *Jews* ask'd *What shall we do, that we may work the work of God?* The meaning of the question seems to be this: What is that particular duty which above all others God expects from us? What's the obedience that may be call'd *working the work of God?* He answers, *This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he has sent.* Here the matter stuck. His enemies could not deny him to be richly furnish'd; but his being the Christ, the anointed of God, the Messiah, the Interpreter, who is one among a thousand, the seed of the woman, the Son of *Abraham*, is what they could not imagine: *They stumbled at that stumbling-stone; as it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone, and a rock of offence, and whoever believes in him shall not be ashamed.*

Rom. ix. 32, 33.

Therefore it is said, that *he was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not*; that is, they knew not what they were chiefly to have known. *He came to his own, and his own receiv'd him not:* not but that they follow'd him with esteem

Joh. i. 10, 11, 12, 13.

SERM. XXXII. iv. 10. esteem and wonder, but they did not receive him as *the gift of God*, as the great appointment of infinite wisdom, as *the hope of Israel*, and the substance of those promises that were made to the fathers: to them that thus *receiv'd him, gave he power to become the Sons of God:* it was a sort of Divine act, *even to them that believe on his name.* Their believing is not put upon the clearness of the evidence, and their own studious impartial searches, but upon a higher nature: they were *born not of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God.*

i. 15, 29. This is what he all along insisted on: to this *John bare witness*, saying, *Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.* And *John*'s disciples who were sent to him, gave this confes-
ver. 49. sion, *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.* Thus the woman of *Samaria* speaks,
iv. 29. *Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Christ?* And so say the men of
ver. 42. the city to her again, *Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.*
i. 45. Thus they speak of him to others, *We have found him, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write.* By which way of arguing, you see how they understood the Scriptures of truth. They were deliver'd *at sundry times, and in divers manners*, they had laws, promises, types, and histories, but, like so many lines, they were all tending to one point. Thus our Saviour speaks of himself,
Joh. vii. 37. in such language as no prophet ever us'd: *He stood in the last and great day of the feast, and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.*

It would have been in vain for any to plead then as some do now, that this was merely a speculation. Let but people mind their duty, live honestly, and carefully, and they shall never be condemn'd

for

for *not believing* what they cannot understand. This vain talking is what the Scripture has left us no room for. Our Lord tells 'em plainly, *If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.* He saith again, *All that came before me are thieves and robbers: I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall find pasture.* And it was a proper question that *John's* disciples came with, *Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?* Several had appear'd in different ages, to make known the will of God, and in particular their own great master, but there was no more than *One* that should come as Mediator between God and man: *It was life eternal to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he had sent.*

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Joh. x. 9.

Joh. xvii. 3.

Cornelius was a person who gave alms, and had a good report of all men, and pray'd always; that is, devotion was his habit and his practice; and yet God bids him send to *Joppa* for *Peter*, who would *tell him words whereby he should be sav'd.* And what are these words, but a report of Jesus Christ? for as he had observ'd to the *Jews* before, *There is salvation in no other, neither any other name given under heaven among men.* So he does the same again: *The word*, saith he, *which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, that word which was publish'd thro' all Judea, and begun from Galilee, how God anointed Jesus Christ with the holy Ghost. To Him give all the prophets witness, that thro' his name, whoever believes in him shall receive remission of sins.* Thus it was foretold he should be preach'd, agreeable to what he saith himself, *Look unto me, and be ye sav'd all the ends of the earth; for I am the Lord, and there is none else.* The Apostle gives it as a maxim, that *other foundation can no man lay, besides that which is laid, who is Jesus Christ.*

Acts x. 5.

ver. 36, 37, 38.

ver. 43.

1 Cor. iii. 11.

So

SERM. XXXII. So that believing in him is collecting and centring all our hopes here, rejecting all other mediators as physicians of no value; looking upon him as *the way, the truth, and the life, that no man can come unto the Father but by him.* He is as the very devils confessed him to be, *The holy one of God.* The new Testament has made so great an account of this, that certainly it must be of the last importance to our salvation. If meer doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God, which some people set in opposition to faith, if these would have done, there was no need to have puzzled the world with the claims of a person who was set *for the fall and the rising again of many in Israel, and a sign that should be spoken against.* *Paul touching the righteousness of the law was blameless,* and yet at that time *the chief of sinners.* He therefore desires to be found in none of that righteousness, but only in one that came from God by faith; but this leads me to shew,

Joh. xiv. 6.

Luk. ii. 34.

(3.) Believing in Christ is relying upon the *righteousness,* that he has brought in for our acceptance with God. This is easily talk'd of, but the soul that ever knew what it meant, finds it the hardest thing in the world. It's easier to *perform* a hundred duties than to *deny* one of them. 'Tis what every good man is most jealous of himself about. He may hope that he loves Christ, there are several arguments of this, but he is afraid that something else is stealing into his soul as the matter of his rejoicing. The pleasures that flow into a duty, and the reflection that afterwards he makes upon it, are not so easily kept out of his hopes of justification. 'Tis a very hard thing, after we have done all, to sit down with patience and say, we are unprofitable servants. This was the misery of the *Jews,* they had a zeal of God, *They went about to establish a righteousness of their own, and would not submit themselves*

Rom. x. 3, 4.

themſelves to the righteouſneſs of God. Now *Chriſt is* the *end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believes.*

And this is believing, not neglecting our duty, but looking beyond it to ſomething elſe as the great atonement. *To him that works is the reward reckoned not of grace, but of debt; but to him that works not,* that is, not with any expectation of being pardon'd for it, *but believes on him that juſtifies the ungodly, to him his faith is imputed for righteouſneſs.* iv. 4, 5. This is believing, and before a Soul is brought to it, the holy Spirit has been thoroughly at work with him. It may be ſuppos'd of every one who relies on the merits of Chriſt, that he owns, he feels the pollution of his nature, according to that cry, of the Church, *Our righteouſneſſes are as filthy rags, and our ſelves as an unclean thing.* He ſees the terrors of the law, *When the commandment comes, ſin revives, and he dies.* He beholds the juſtice of God, who *will by no means clear the guilty,* and *in whoſe ſight no fleſh living can be juſtified.* He confeſſes the vanity of all his own endeavours, to anſwer the demands of a righteous Creator. *How ſhall man be juſt with God, or how ſhall he be pure who is born of a woman?* And oh! how deſirable to ſuch a one will *Jeſus the Mediator of the new covenant* be, and *the blood of ſprinkling, that ſpeaks better things than the blood of Abel!* Rom. vii. 9. Heb. xii. 23.

The more you value the death of Chriſt, the greater evidence do you give of believing. The Apoſtle wanted to *know the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, and to be conform'd to his death. Him has God ſet forth as a propitiation for our ſins through faith in his blood.* He in his own perſon is the great Propitiation, the Paſchal Lamb, *Chriſt our paſſover is ſacrificed for us.* But the particular notice that our faith takes, is of his blood. He was *delivered for our offences, and roſe again for our juſtification.* Phil. iii. 10. Rom. iii. 25. 1 Cor. v. 7. Rom. iv. 25.

Thoſe

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Thoſe people that deny the infinite evil of ſin, (by which *we* mean its being directed againſt an infinite Majeſty, and deſerving an eternal puniſhment) theſe are *enemies to the croſs of Chriſt*; they make it a needleſs thing, and what the world might have done without: But whatever arguments perſons may have againſt the ſatisfaction made to divine juſtice, one ſhake of an uneaſy conſcience will ſet them to rights; they will then ſee, that *without ſhedding of blood, there could be no remiſſion.* This is believing, our perſons, our duties, or, as they are call'd, *our garments are waſh'd in the blood of the Lamb.* 'Tis here, that faith takes a faſt hold, Rev. i. 5. that Chriſt has *loved us, and given himſelf for us, having waſh'd us from our ſins in his own blood.* A poor convinc'd ſoul finds he is undone, and that Pſ. cxxx. 3. there's no *ſtanding in God's ſight when once he is angry*; and it is only owing to him from whom *we* Rom. v. 2. *have received the atonement*, that we have *acceſs by faith into the grace wherein we ſtand.*

(4.) Believing in Chriſt is deriving from his fulneſs the principles of *a new life.* The ſatisfaction Eph. v. 26. that he has made, was with a view to this. *He* Gal. iv. 19. *lov'd the church, and gave himſelf for it, that he might ſanctify it with the waſhing of water by the word.* Converſion is a looking to him as the *Au-* Heb. xii. 2. *thor of our faith.* Then is *Chriſt form'd in us*; from that time we are his people, and feel his power. He ſends out his ſervants to *open our eyes, to turn us from darkneſs to light*; not that they can do it, for Joh. v. 21. *who is ſufficient for theſe things?* But the *Son quickens whom he will.* Thus he ſpeaks to *Paul* in a Acts xviii. 10. viſion at *Corinth*, *I have much people in this city.* He ſees us in our bondage as well as in our guilt, and if from both theſe the Son makes us free, *then* Joh. viii. 36. *are we free indeed.* In which words he is to be underſtood of ſpiritual liberty, having ſtated the oppoſite condition in theſe terms, *He that commits ſin is the ſervant of ſin.*

This

This is believing, then we begin to live, or rather *Christ lives in us, and the life we live in the flesh is by faith in the Son of God*; so that when it's said, that he is preach'd among the *Gentiles*, and believed on in the world, the meaning is, he has made them alive. *He is the Head over all things unto the church, and has the fulness of him who fills all in all. And you has* HE *quickned who were dead in trespasses and* SINS. The Scripture has represented him as an agent in our conversion. *When I am lifted up*, saith he, *I will draw all men unto me.* The mountain of this Lord's house is *exalted above the tops of the mountains*; HE *will teach us of his law, and we will walk in* HIS *way.* The believer has not only a new state, having pass'd from death to life, but a new nature, he is brought *from the power of Satan, to the living God.* Christ who pleads *for* him, does also plead *with* him, his own cause; and he does it in such a way, as to make all opposition flee. *The strong man armed, has kept his goods in peace; but here is a stronger than he, who takes from him his armour wherein he trusted.* This is the Apostle's account of his own conversion. *It pleased God to call him by his grace, and reveal his Son in him*, and with that begun his hopes of glory. *This faith is of the operation of God.*

Gal. ii. 20. Eph. i. 23. ii. 1. Joh. xii. 32. Isa. ii. 2, 3. Gal. i. 15, 16.

(5.) Believing in Christ, is *growing* in the spiritual life. We are *preserved in Christ Jesus, and call'd. As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him: Rooted and built up in him, established in the faith, as ye have been taught, and abounding therein with thanksgiving. I am come*, saith he, *that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly.* To this purpose we read of his *dwelling in our hearts by faith.* This agrees to the language of his own prayer to the Father, *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.* This will be thoroughly understood in the visions of another state, *In that*

Jude 1. Col. ii. 6, 7. Joh. x. 10. Eph iii. 17. Joh. xvii. 23.

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that day ye shall know, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and I in you. He told his disciples, *I go away and come again, because I live, ye shall live also. He that has begun a good work is to perform it to the day of Christ Jesus.*

xiv. 20. ver. 19. Phil. i. 6.

So that believing is a continued rest of Soul upon him. Your faith must be often looking thither. *Who is this that comes up out of the wilderness leaning on her beloved?* Thus he advises, *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of it self, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit, for without me ye can do nothing.*

Cant. viii. 5. Joh. xv. 4, 5.

Aug. 2. 1719.

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(6.) WHEN we believe in Christ, we regard him as our great *Comforter* in every time of need. There's a distinction that you ought to observe in this case which will keep you out of a mistake that many people run into. I do not assert that faith always takes into it the joys of the holy Ghost, for we know there are persons who *sit in darkness, and see no light,* and yet *fear the Lord, and hearken to the voice of his servant.* But you must own, that even these are *looking* to Jesus that they may be *lighten'd.* They have no other friend to trust to. This is a *rock* that is *higher than themselves,* where they seek a shelter

Isa. l. 10. Ps. xxxiv. 5. lxi. 2.

when their souls are overwhelm'd within them; and therefore they are exhorted to *trust in the Lord, and stay themselves upon their God.* SERM. XXXIII. lxi. 2.

I do not mean that the believer always has these comforts from a Saviour, but that he flies to HIM for them, and is encouraged by that gracious proclamation, *Come unto* ME *all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* 'Tis he that saith, *Take* MY *yoke upon you, and learn of* ME, *and ye shall find rest unto your souls, for* MY *yoke is easy, and* MY *burden is light.* And thus he was promis'd: He is *the root of Jesse, who shall stand for an ensign of the people, to which the Gentiles shall seek, and his rest shall be glorious.* Our lot is cast into a rolling world, which like the troubled sea cannot rest, but *sends up mire and dirt.* Here we are floating, tossing, heaving, and cannot expect a full rest till we come to that which *remains for the people of God,* when *a sea* of waters shall be chang'd into one *of glass,* and instead of being unsettled any longer, we shall have crowns on our heads, and harps in our hands, *to sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb.* Matt. xi. 28, 29, 30. Isa. xi. 10. Heb. iv. 9. Rev. xv. 2. Joh. xiv. 18.

But even in this life our Redeemer does not leave us *comfortless,* or as the word signifies, he does not leave us orphans. We are not fatherless though our Head is gone up to heaven, and we see him no more; or if we are so, yet our hope is in him with whom *the fatherless find mercy. I will see you again,* saith he to his disciples, *and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy shall no man take away from you.* And that he told 'em in maintenance of a kind promise, *Verily, verily I say unto you, ye shall weep and lament, and the world shall rejoice, and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.* This he illustrates by a similitude that is very common, and yet very powerful. He takes the chief instance of nature to shew the efficacy of grace, *A* xvi. 22. ver. 20, 21;

SERM. XXXIII. *woman when she is in travail, has sorrow, because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of a child, she remembers no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.* And that unaccountable transition from a sadness to a serenity of mind was to be brought about by *his coming again.*

The meaning of that I take to be foretold; both these senses are included in it. *First*, it immediately refers to his conversation with the disciples after his passion, by which he gave *infallible proofs* of his rising again; this was a delightful interview to those who run from his cross and wept over his grave. *He shewed them his hands and his feet, and then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord:* But, *secondly*, surely the promise is more extended, and reaches farther than to the blessings of those *forty days.* It belongs to all those upon whom he has bestow'd the other Comforter, *The Spirit of truth who shall abide with us for ever.* And he mentions this as a mystery, that this Spirit is one *whom the world cannot receive, because it sees him not, neither knows him, but ye know him, for he dwells with you, and shall be in you.* And by those words he has prepared you to understand what follows, *I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you; yet a little while and the world sees me no more, but ye see me*, i. e. by a faith that others have not, *because I live, ye shall live also.* There's a connection in the parts of that promise, that shall reach through all the ages of time, whilst there is a believer upon earth, and from it he deduces another gracious promise: *He that has my commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves me; and he that loves me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest my self to him.* This he repeats and enlarges, *If any man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* Certainly

Joh. xx. 20.

xiv. 17, 18, 19.

ver. 21.

ver. 23.

tainly though these phrases are to be guarded against any gross and impure exposition, yet they mean something. SERM. XXXIII.

There is a joy that is struck from a communion with Christ, whether a carnal world will allow it or no. *He stands at the door and knocks, and if any man hears his voice, he comes in and sups with him.* He knew the toil that his people were like to meet with, and therefore as they *lacked nothing* whilst he was among them, so they shall be as well furnish'd when he went away. Bidding them *go and disciple all nations,* was throwing 'em into a duty of the greatest compass; ordering them to *baptize into the name of Father, Son and Holy Ghost,* was engaging against 'em all the disdain of the earth; but what signifies that, when he saith, that *he will be with them to the end of the world?* Rev. iii. 20. Matth. xxviii. 18, 19, 20.

We find they us'd to set *his* promise over against all their troubles. As the Apostle argues, *Though I suffer these things, nevertheless I am not asham'd, for I know in whom I have believ'd,* q. d. he has already accounted for all that. Good people will have their sorrows; *without are fightings, within are fears*; and what must they flee to? Here's a plain way for their hope, *In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace, be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.* Thus he arises, not only with life and virtue, but *with healing under his wings.* He is the consolation of *Israel. His love is better than wine, and the smell of his garments than all spices. We sit under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet unto our taste. He that believes on him, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters.* We believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and *believing, we have life in his name. The God of hope fills us with all joy and peace in believing, that we may abound in hope thro' the power of the holy Ghost.* 2 Tim. i. 12. Joh. xvi. 33. Mal. iv. 2. Cant. i. 4. Joh. vii. 38. —xx. 31. Rom. xv. 13.

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7. They that believe in Chriſt, are obedient to him in all manner of converſation. I know that a ſevere accuracy will not let this go by the name of faith, but as it always is the fruit of it, I ſhall not ſeparate what God has join'd together. 'Tis certain, that they who depend upon a Saviour are devoted to him; he is their *law-giver*, they ſerve the Lord Chriſt. *One is their maſter, that is Chriſt.* *He purifies to* HIMSELF *a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* And it is ſo much in vain to make a profeſſion without this, that he reaſons upon the folly of it, *Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I ſay? I have ordain'd*, ſaith he, *that ye ſhould go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit ſhould remain; hereby is my Father glorified, that ye bring forth fruit, ſo ſhall ye be my diſciples.*

Mat. xxiii. 10.

Tit. ii. 14.

Joh. xv. 16.

This is ſometimes call'd the will of his Father, and ſometimes he gives out the command in his own name. *The word that I ſpeak is not mine, but the Father's who has ſent me.* And in his laſt prayer he ſaith, *I have manifeſted thy name to the men whom thou gaveſt me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gaveſt them me, and they have kept thy word: Now they have known that whatever things thou haſt given me are of thee, for I have given unto them the words that thou gaveſt me.* And again afterwards, *I have given unto them thy word, and the world has hated them.* Beſides theſe, there are Scriptures that aſſert the doctrine to be his own, tho' not excluſive of the Father, but yet he repreſents himſelf as the fountain of light and truth. Hence we read of thoſe who not only know not God, but *obey not the Goſpel of his Son; and of our adorning the doctrine of* GOD *our Saviour in all things. He that abides in the doctrine of* CHRIST, *he has the Father and the Son.* We are not *without law to God, but under the law to Chriſt.* It was for HIM that *Paul* ſuffer'd the loſs of all things; he was ſo entirely

xvii. 6, 7.

ver. 14.

Tit. ii. 20.

2 Joh. 9.

1 Cor. ix. 21.

tirely devoted to him, that *as always, so now, this was his earneſt expectation and deſire, that* CHRIST *ſhould be magnified in his body whether by life or death*; as if he had no other end above or beyond the magnifying of Chriſt; and this he grounds upon a principle that is of the greateſt extent, for *to me to live is Chriſt.* In preaching CHRIST, *they warn'd every man, and taught every man, that they might preſent every man perfect in Chriſt, ſtriving according to his working, who wrought in them mightily. In the name of Jeſus every knee is to bow, of things in heaven, earth, and under the earth.* SERM. XXXIII. Phil. i. 20. ver. 21. Col. i. 28, 29. Phil. ii. 10.

8. In particular, they that believe in Chriſt, live in the acts of religious *worſhip* to him. They endeavour to walk worthy of him: He is *the King of Saints.* 'Tis he who *loved us, and waſh'd us from our ſins in his own blood, and has made us to be kings and prieſts to God and his Father.* We are to *grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; to whom be glory both now and for ever, Amen.* They come to his footſtool, they bow before his throne, and worſhip towards the place where his honour dwells. Rev. i. 5, 6. 2 Pet. iii. 18.

To this did the providence of God give an early teſtimony. Wiſe men came from the eaſt to *Jeruſalem*, ſaying, *Where is he who is born King of the Jews, for we have ſeen* HIS *ſtar, and are come to worſhip* HIM. 'Tis making very little of that word to ſuppoſe that it means no more than the preſents they brought him; for *when they ſaw the ſtar, they rejoic'd with exceeding great joy.* Was this only for an opportunity to pay him a civil complement? When they came into the houſe, *they ſaw the young child and his mother, and fell down and worſhiped* HIM; *and when they had open'd their treaſures, they preſented unto* HIM *gifts, gold, frankincenſe and myrrh.* Theſe I take for granted were the methods of adoration in their country. It was foretold of Chriſt, Mat. ii. 1, 2. ver. 11.

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that *the kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.* Psal. lxxii. 10, 11. *Yea, all kings shall fall down before him, and all nations shall serve him.* They meant by what they did a great deal more than homage to a temporal prince, because such a carriage was all a superfluity to an Infant who could not receive it.

If it's said that these were heathens and idolaters, and therefore nothing ought to be concluded from their practice as a rule to ours, the answer is very easy; they were now under a particular conduct from the great God; Providence brought 'em in as witnesses to him who was to be *the desire of all nations;* Hag. ii. 6. there was a star to guide them thither, an extraordinary dream to direct them back again; and can we think he would suffer them to pollute the first honours that were paid to our Saviour with rank idolatry? Is it not natural to suppose, that these men were brought from afar with greater thoughts than meerly because *a child was born, and a son was given?* They do not speak of his miraculous conception, that he was the son of a Virgin, but regard him in a quality of which there was no visible appearance, as one *born King of the Jews,* and as such a one they came to worship him. A king of the *Jews* had no relation to them, they were in no subjection to a prince of that country; but under this name they enquire for a Saviour, who being the object of their worship, must be conceived to have another nature besides the human. *All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the kindreds of the* Psal. xxii. 27, 29, 30. *nations shall worship before* THEE. *All they that be fat upon earth, shall eat and worship: All they that go down to the dust shall bow down before* HIM; *A seed shall serve* HIM, *it shall be accounted to the Lord for* lxxii. 15, 17. *a generation. He shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba; prayer also shall be made for him continually,*

continually, and daily shall he be praised. HIS *name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: Men shall be blessed in* HIM, *and all nations shall call him blessed.*

To this agrees the practice of his own followers, whom he would no more suffer to call him good, and fall down before him, than he would the young man in the Gospel, if they had not been persuaded of another nature besides what came into the imaginations of that person. But when the *word was made flesh and dwelt among them, they beheld* Joh. i. 14. *his glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father.* What a strange acknowledgment does he receive from *Nathanael*, upon his telling him, *Before Philip call'd thee, whilst thou wast under the fig-tree I saw thee?* Upon which he cries out, *Rabbi, thou art the* ver. 49. *Son of God, thou art the King of Israel?* A prophet might have said as much as this. *Elisha* told the king of *Israel* what the king of *Syria* said in his bed-chamber, and therefore the conclusion from his seeing *Nathanael* under the fig-tree, could be no more than that of the *Samaritan* woman, *Sir, I perceive thou art a prophet:* But as soon as ever he receives the knowledge of the truth, he professes another sort of regard. Though Christ *did* no more in that case than some prophets had done, yet he *was* much more than any prophet had been. The confession goes out in such language as was never us'd to any other, *Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.* And our Lord is so far from correcting or holding in the zeal of the man, that he opens out the argument there was for it, *Ye shall see heaven opened, and the Angels of God* ver. 51. *ascending and descending on the Son of man.*

We find that as the Apostles were better instructed, they went to greater examples of adoration. *Peter* fell at his feet, and cried out, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.* This he was

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led into by a ſurprize at the draught of fiſhes. 'Tis a ſtrange way of addreſſing one who had both given him a miracle and a favour. Why ſhould he upon that talk of his *departing from him*, and why muſt that lead him into a confeſſion of his being a *ſinful man?* I take it for an impreſſion of the ſame nature with that upon *Iſaiah*, when he ſaw *his glory* in perſon as *Peter* did in fact, *Wo is me, for I am undone, a man of unclean lips, for mine eyes have ſeen the King, the* LORD OF HOSTS.

Iſa. vi. 5.

It was a very proper motion made by the *Phariſees*, when the children and the multitude were ſinging *Hoſannah* before him, *Maſter, rebuke thy diſciples:* That he ought to have done, if he had not look'd upon himſelf as the great object of worſhip. For we find of whom theſe things were to be ſaid, *Bleſſed is he that comes in the name of the Lord:* GOD *is the Lord who has ſhewn us light.*

Pſ. cxviii. 26, 27.

After his reſurrection he gave way to the ſame practice, and that in a higher degree. We read that *when they ſaw him, they worſhiped him, but ſome doubted.* That the term of worſhip does not always ſignify a religious adoration, is certain; but that it ſometimes does ſo, is as certain; and therefore the queſtion is not what ſenſe it may bear in other places, but what is more likely in *this:* Here we read of ſome that worſhiped him, and of others that doubted. Doubted what? whether they ſhould pay him an external civility? If he was *not* their Saviour, there could be no harm in bowing to him. If *that* was all that the others meant by their worſhip, there need be no great diſpute between them: But it's plain theſe doubts were about the truth of his reſurrection. They who were ſatisfy'd of that, ſhew it in a way that the reſt durſt not, and that is, by acts of religious worſhip. Nay more than that, we read of his taking them as far as to *Bethany, and bleſſing them, and whilſt he bleſſed*

Matth. xxviii. 17.

Luk. xxiv. 51, 52.

ſed them, he was parted from them, and taken up to hea- SERM.
ven; and yet THEN it is ſaid *they worſhip'd him.* XXXIII.

Was *this* only an external compliment too? We pay ſuch things to a creature, but never to an abſent one. What can worſhiping him, when he was gone, include leſs than their belief, that he is the Lord who *fills heaven and earth?* Had they regarded no more than his body, all reſpects to that were over; but we read their thoughts in their carriage, and it muſt not be ſaid of them, that *they worſhip'd they knew not what.*

Nay, the great badge of the Chriſtian Religion, that which his diſciples wear, is *the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt.* Into this they Matth.
are *baptiz'd*; and what an odd character would xxviii. 19.
it be to ſay, that we are reſign'd to one ſupreme and two ſubordinate Gods? That we are as much devoted to a higher and a lower creature as we are to *the Father of Spirits?* The notion that baptiſm is not an act of worſhip, is ſuch a degrading of that ſolemnity, that it only ſhews the people will ſay any thing to maintain their ſcheme. Is it not worſhip for me to give up my ſelf to be the Lord's? To have his name call'd upon by me? To enter into his covenant, and proclaim this to the world? Ought not my ſoul to go along with that ſurrender? Do I not then avouch the Lord to be my God, and depend upon the bleſſings that he has promis'd, and is not this worſhiping? *One ſhall ſay I am the Lord's——and another ſhall ſub-* Iſa. xliv. 5,
ſcribe with his hand to the Lord. What Lord is 6.
this? He gives the anſwer himſelf, *Thus ſaith the Lord, the King of Iſrael, and his Redeemer the Lord of hoſts, I am the firſt, and I am the laſt, and beſides me there is no God.*

9. Believing in Chriſt is truſting him for *protection* to the end of life. Our inheritance is reſerv'd, our principles are imperfect. It does not appear

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appear either what we shall *be*, or what we shall *have*. Our great life is not reveal'd, but *hid with Christ in God; and he who is our life* is hid too. We are waiting for the day when *he shall appear, and we appear with him in glory*. The grace that is to be brought to us, comes *at the revelation of Jesus Christ*. No security of the covenant, no stanchness of the promises, can set the Christian above his fears; and therefore he must look to One who can secure him till he gets home.

Col. iii. 3, 4.

1 Pet. i. 13.

And for this, he has his eyes upon that Saviour, who is *able to keep him from falling, and to present him faultless before his glory, with exceeding joy*. We are *preserv'd in Christ Jesus, and call'd*. The perseverance of the Saints is as true as it is comfortable; but it has been much oppos'd. Now, if the dispute is upon man's ability to save himself, and the sufficiency of those principles that are put into a believer to work thro', and work out a salvation, we must give it up. *There's no just man upon earth that does good, and sins not: a just man falls seven times a day*. And if we had no other security than this, we must never affirm any thing of that nature.

Jude 24.

But you know the truth hinges upon something else; and that is, whether Christ *can* save to the uttermost those that come to him, and whether he has not said that he *will*. Our confidence is in *this very thing, that he who has begun a good work, will perform it till the day of Christ*. So that, believing is depending upon him for what's behind.

Phil. i. 6.

Every Christian finds himself engag'd in an unequal *war:* there's no fair match between the confederate powers of darkness, and the poor frail resolutions of a man. But the battle is the Lord's, and so our confidence is in one, who *being made perfect from his sufferings, is become the author of eternal salvation to as many as obey him*. This makes it needful

Heb. v. 9.

needful that *the just* should *live by his faith*; *the righteousness of God is reveal'd from faith to faith.* Believing is a continual rest of soul upon Christ: we in this wilderness are *leaning on our beloved.* Here's *a hope set before us*; *and to that we flee for a refuge, to lay hold upon it. This hope we have as an anchor sure and stedfast, and enters into that within the vail.* The anchor takes *its hold* above, we have *ours* below, and keep pulling, and drawing, and bringing ourselves to. Thus we are pleading his righteousness afresh, that our God may *multiply to pardon. The life we live in the flesh, is by faith in the Son of God.* Living in holiness is a renew'd or a continu'd believing. We have never done with that faith till our life is at an end in the flesh, and we gone up to the world of Spirits.

SERM. XXXIII. Rom. i. 17. Heb. vi. 18, 19. Isa. lv. 7. Gal. ii. 20.

10. Believing in Christ is looking to him as the *finisher* of our faith; as one that is to give the compleating stroke to his own work. *His hands laid the foundation*, as it was said of *Zerubbabel*, in the building of the temple, *and his hands shall lay the top-stone with shouting.* And what are they to shout? but *grace, grace unto it?* that is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are to be *complete in* HIM. It's he that saves εἰς τὸ παντελὲς to the last perfection, to the end of the work, to the giving in all that's meant by it. Our proficiency is by degrees, and God knows, very slow ones. *The righteous holds on his way, and he that has clean hands grows stronger and stronger.* But the perfection comes all at once; one moment will give us the fulness of grace and purity, that here we have sought in vain.

Zech. iv. 9. Col. ii. 10. Job xvii. 9.

Now, this comes from Christ: *he is the head of principality and power.* Every man is to be *presented perfect in him:* he is call'd *the finisher of our faith.* And with respect to this great happiness, we *die in faith*, knowing that when we are *absent from the body*,

2 Cor. v. 8.

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body, we shall be present with the Lord. To be *with Christ* is far better; 'tis that which gives us a *desire to depart.* In this we have an eye to the full felicity of the soul, that in leaving one house of an earthly tabernacle, we shall be *cloath'd upon with another house which is from heaven,* and so *mortality is swallow'd up of life.*

Phil. i. 23.

But besides this, with Christ we trust our bodies, *our flesh shall rest in hope*; and *if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. He is the resurrection and the life; and whoever believes in him, tho' he were dead, yet shall he live.* They are call'd *the dead in Christ,* who shall rise first. His resurrection is consider'd two ways: *First,* as the pattern of ours; he being rais'd, is become *the first-fruits of them that sleep. Every man in his own order, Christ the first-fruits, and then they that are Christ's at his coming.* And, *Secondly,* He is the author of that great work; He *changes and fashions these vile bodies like unto his glorious body, by a power that subdues all things to himself.* They that are in their graves shall *hear the voice of the Son of man; and they that hear shall live. Our Redeemer lives, and he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.* So that, *tho' after our skin worms destroy this body, yet in our flesh we shall see* GOD, *whom we shall see for ourselves, and not for another, tho' our reins be consum'd within us.*

Ps. xvi. 9. 1 Thes. iv. 14. Joh. xi. 25. 1 Cor. xv. 23. Phil. iii. 21. Joh. v. 25. Job. xix. 25, 26, 27.

This it is to believe; and for these several benefits does our faith regard him, who was manifest in the flesh, and justified in the Spirit. He is seen of Angels, and he is believ'd on in the world. We walk by faith, and they by sight. They behold him *as he is*; and tho' we at this distance do not *see him, yet we love him*; *and in whom, tho' now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with a joy unspeakable, and full of glory.* This is *the faith of God's elect,*

1 Pet. i. 6.

elect, the employment that it's in, and the application that it makes. It is a faith in the Son of God, as well as in the Father. We believe in God, we believe also in him. This gives a virtue to all our religion: the Scriptures are no farther able to make us wise to salvation, than thro' the faith which is in Christ Jesus. SERM. XXXIII.

II. I am now to open this account that is given of Him, as an argument of his DIVINITY; that He in whom the world are to believe, can be no other than the most high God. You plainly find a distinction between the two natures in our blessed Lord. Sometimes he is represented as the *medium*, rather than the *object* of our faith: for faith being an act of worship, it ought to fix upon none but the supreme cause: *He that comes unto God must believe that he is*; and there is a consideration that we may have of our Saviour, wherein he cannot be the object of it. The Apostle is very particular, and speaks with all the guard that could be desir'd. *He* saith Christ *was manifest in these last times for us, who by him do believe in God that rais'd him from the dead, and gave him glory, that our faith and hope may be in God.* Heb. xi. 6. 1 Pet. i. 21.

Here you find two things. *First*, that as Mediator we do not believe *in him*, but *by him*. He does not receive our faith, but direct it and convey it. And, *Secondly*, that the faith and hope of a Christian can be in no other than a God; and therefore, if we are not to have a higher consideration of a Redeemer, than as a middle person between God and us, we can never be said to believe *in him*. What care does the Apostle take to tell us, that this is too much for a creature? And if there had not been Scriptures of another import, that reveal him to us as the proper object of our faith in the same way that the Father is, we could never have said so much of him. Now, these

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texts are not to be dash'd against one another; there's no manner of contradiction between 'em.

We may, and ought to regard our Saviour in his two limited characters: *First*, as true and proper man; one *made of a woman.* Thus he was frail in his body, and imperfect in the qualifications of his soul: he *grew in knowledge* as well as *stature.* There were things that he *knew not.* He came to a fig-tree, if he might find fruit on it. The hour of judgment is what no man knows, nor the Angels, nor *even the Son,* but the Father. On this account he would not be call'd good, because there is none good but one that is God.

Secondly, Even as Mediator he is to be consider'd in a lower station. For tho' that character takes into it a Divine Nature, yet he is situate between God and man; below the one, and above the other; or rather, as high as the one, and as low as the other. Thus he was *made under the law*, and came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. And *when all things are subject, the Son himself must give up the kingdom to the Father, and be subject, that God may be all in all.* In this respect *the Father is greater than he.* But neither of these are a contradiction to those other accounts that we have of him. As man he was not equal to God in nature; as Mediator, he was not equal to him in place, but appear'd *in the form of a servant.* But in the existence that he had before he took upon him our nature, *he thought it no robbery to be equal with God.* Nor can we believe in him the several ways that I have open'd to you, if he is not *the only living and true God.*

1 Cor. xv. 24.

Joh. xiv. 17.

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Aug. 16, 1719.

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AFTER this preliminary distinction, into which we are led by a cloud of witnesses, I may re-assume my argument, That he who is thus believ'd on in this world, deserves the name that's given him in this text, of the most high GOD. By that expression I do not mean a titular deity. Those shuffling arts of language are unworthy of a minister, and scandalous to the Gospel that he preaches: *We have renounc'd the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of the Lord deceitfully.* As our exhortation is not of *uncleanness*, so neither is it of *deceit or of guile; but as we are put in trust with the Gospel, so we preach, not as pleasing men*, who may easily be impos'd on, *but that God who searches the hearts*, and knows what we mean in every disguise of speech. For, *there's not a word in our mouths, but lo, he knows it altogether.* We are not sent to trifle with mankind. If Christ is not God, it would be dangerous to call him so; and I should never dare to do it without a guard. But if he is, we need not be afraid of owning his title, against all the learning and violence that are brought into the quarrel; for it will be found, *that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.*

2 Cor. iv. 2.

1 Thes. ii. 3.

1 Cor. i. 20.

I have already shewn you what it is for him to be believ'd on: and as I think that account agrees with the whole current of the Bible, so I shall go over

SER M. XXXIV. over every one of thoſe particulars again, and let you ſee that they can be true of none but *the moſt high God.* You have heard that believing in him is, 1. Receiving the *teſtimony* that we have concerning him. 2. A *looking* upon Him as the only Saviour of the world. 3. *Relying* upon the righteouſneſs that he has provided. 4. *Deriving* from him a principle of grace. 5. Being *ſupplied* by him with an increaſe. 6. *Regarding* him as the great comforter of our ſouls. 7. *Obeying* him in all manner of converſation. 8. Giving him religious *worſhip.* 9. *Truſting* him for a protection; and 10. *Looking* to him as the finiſher of our faith. That theſe are things comprehended in our believing, I doubt not, will be plain enough to all that look into the Scriptures, he that runs may read it. Now, I ſee no danger in affirming, that every one of theſe particulars ſuppoſe Him to be truly and eternally God, or otherwiſe our preaching is in vain, and your faith in vain.

1. As believing ſignifies our receiving the teſtimony that is given concerning him, it concludes him to be a God, or otherwiſe, we muſt look upon the new Teſtament as a ſtrange book, if it does no more than proclaim the coming of a creature. They Iſa. xl. 9, 10, 11. that bring good tydings, are order'd to *lift up their voice with ſtrength, to lift it up, and not be afraid, ſaying to the cities of Judah, Behold your* GOD. *Behold, the* LORD GOD *ſhall come with a ſtrong hand, and his arm ſhall rule for him. Behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.* And this is He, who ſhall *feed his flock like a ſhepherd.* Why muſt there be warnings given, prophets rais'd up in every age, wonders and miracles wrought, and above all, the *holy Ghoſt ſent down*, merely to make way for a deriv'd being, who, notwithſtanding all his glory, is infinitely below *the Father of Spirits?*

It

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It has been the design of God, ever since he made the world, to be worship'd in it. And he has taken ways to display himself for that very purpose. Thus it pleas'd him to write out his perfections upon the heavens, which *are the work of his fingers.* He has added to these arguments the methods of his providence, by which a man is brought to say, *Verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily, he is a God who rules in the earth.* And these are so clear and valid, that *the heathen are without excuse, because what may be known of God is manifest in 'em; for he has reveal'd it to 'em.* But there are still more eminent ways of making him known to the world. A Redeemer appears with a greater evidence than can ever be fetch'd out of the works of creation: he has something better than sun, moon, and stars, to tell mankind what he is. And,

Psal. lvii. 10. Rom. i. 19, 20.

Must the supreme God be discover'd with these lower and feebler methods? And shall a creature shew himself to the world in ways more divine and glorious? Are we directed to find out the Father by the growth of the earth, and the beauty of the heavens? And can there be no revelation of the *Son,* but by sending him among us, with a train of miracles, signs, and wonders, and last of all, by the effusion of the Spirit? Is the holy Ghost sent down to glorifie the Son, and are we directed to the lowest parts of the creation, in our searches after the Father? *Ask the beasts of the field, and they will tell thee, and the birds of the air will declare to thee.* In these cases the honour is no way proportion'd; we worship and serve the creature more than the Creator?

The greatest testimony that ever the world receiv'd was by the holy Spirit. This is above all thunders, voices, ministers, prophets, and miracles. He was sent down from heaven: and what is he

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a witneſs to? What's his errand among us, both in forming the Scripture, and working upon the conſcience? Chriſt tells us, *He ſhall glorifie* ME, *for he ſhall take of mine, and ſhew it unto you.* Joh. xvi. 15. *We*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *are witneſſes of theſe things, and ſo is the holy Ghoſt, whom God has given to them that obey him.* Acts v. 32. The diſpenſation of the Spirit is to lead us to a Saviour. And is our way to *Him* under greater directions than ever that to a *God* was? Is there ſomething in making *him* known more divine and glorious, than any methods that the Father himſelf has taken for ſeveral generations? what? ſhall the greater Perſon be talk'd of with lower diſcoveries? and ſhall a creature, a deriv'd dependent being, have more train and retinue to his reputation, than ever was heard of for the ſupreme Majeſty of heaven and earth?

Certainly, you muſt conclude, that He who ſhines into our hearts, does it to give us *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face*, or perſon *of Jeſus Chriſt.* 2 Cor. iv. 6. Wee ſee in him the glory of a God; and on purpoſe that we may ſee it, more is done for us, and more in us than making a world: *To him give all the prophets witneſs*; and it was *the Spirit of Chriſt* in thoſe prophets that bare this witneſs: *They ſearch'd diligently into this ſalvation*, namely, *the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow.* 1 Pet. i. 9, 10. There are propheſies of the moſt early date; and theſe are match'd with the teſtimony of the holy Ghoſt in after ages. Now, what could be done more for a God?

And is all this profuſion of evidence a tribute to one who is a creature? No, the Scripture has never given us an account ſo unequal and monſtrous as that muſt have been. We are not directed to the creation, to things that *do appear* for the proofs of an *eternal power and godhead*; and to things that do *not appear*, that from them we may have our conviction

conviction of a Saviour. This would be too much for him if he was not God; and therefore we are expreſly told, when he was in the world, that *the world was made by him.* SERM. XXXIV. Joh. i. 10.

There are two interpretations given of theſe words, which are very different from one another, tho' they are both of 'em directed againſt the truth as it is in Jeſus. Sometimes we find one of 'em inſiſted on, and ſometimes another; for Satan is reſolv'd to drive the nail that will go.

Some tell us, that the world made by him is the Goſpel-church, which is a ſort of a new world. But to ſuch expoſitors we may cry out with the Apoſtle, *O fooliſh people, who has bewitch'd you?* Do but ſee what confuſion it brings into the text: *He was in the world*; that is, in the church; *and the world was made by him*; that is, he is the author of the church; but then it is added, and *the world knew him not.* Can this be underſtood of the church? Did not *they* know him? Yes, the very thing that made 'em his people, or rather prov'd 'em ſo, was their *ſeeing his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* He himſelf diſtinguiſh'd between the world and his people: *O righteous Father, the world has not known thee, but I have known thee, and theſe have known that thou haſt ſent me.* Joh. xvii. 25. But this ſhews that *the legs of the lame are not equal.* 'Tis with the adverſaries of his Divinity, as it was with thoſe of his Innocence, that their *witneſs agrees not together.*

Another interpretation which people are now driven to, is that he made the world as an *inſtrument.* But did ever true language ſay that an inſtrument made any thing? Is it not enough that we talk error, but muſt we talk nonſenſe? *Shall the ax boaſt itſelf againſt him that heweth therewith? or ſhall the ſaw magnify itſelf againſt him that ſhakes it; as if the rod ſhould ſhake itſelf againſt him that lifts it up,*

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or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood? The world was made by *him*, who was then *in it*, *i. e.* when he was made flesh, and dwelt among us. And, if this may be said of an instrument, how can any words go higher to the honour of the supreme agent, than these we have of *him*, that *all*

Joh. i. 3. *things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

What's the report that we have of him? *John the Baptist* was the greatest of his messengers, and he proclaims, *Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make straight in the desart a high-way for our God.* This passage in the old Testament cannot without

Isa. xl. 5, 6. fraud and force be applied to a creature: *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.* And is not this to be understood of the Supreme Being? How is the comfort to flow or be reveal'd, but by the voice of him that cries in the wilderness? This is what *John the Baptist* said of himself, that He was the person describ'd in that prophecy. He was, as his father *Zacharias* said of him, *sent before the face of the Lord, to prepare the way before him.* Now this is call'd by the prophet preparing the way *for our God*, for the God of *Israel*, who was known by his relation to that people; for *the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him.* Thus it is farther said of *John*, that *he was the prophet of the Highest*, of the Most High: which is

Ps. cxlvi. 10. a name fit for none but Him, who is *over all blessed for evermore. The Lord shall reign for ever, even thy*

Heb. xiii. 8. *God, O Zion, unto all generations. Jesus is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever.*

2. In believing we look upon him as the only Saviour of the world; and this cannot be affirm'd of

1 Joh. v. 20. one that is not God: *We know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal*

ternal life. You will find a great deal of difference between Him and other good men, who have serv'd their generation according to the will of God. SERM. XXXIV.

I take *Moses* to be the first in that character; a person honour'd with the fullest commission, and the clearest credentials: *There arose not a prophet since in Israel like to Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.* It was needful that the people should believe his being sent from God, that he did not those things of his own mind. Of him we have this character in the new Testament, *that he was faithful to him that appointed him in all his house.* But then, it is there observ'd, that he was only so faithful *as a servant, and in testimony of things that were to be spoken after.* There was no fear of mistaking him for a God; the distinction was always plain and full between himself and the Divine Majesty whom he represented. He was *made a God to Pharaoh*; but that sentence does not deserve a place in the objection. The man must be very ignorant indeed, who concludes his Deity from that. He all along told them, that *their murmurings were not against him, but the Lord.* He did every thing according to the pattern shew'd him in the mount; and therefore saith himself in that song. *He, (i.e.* God) *loved the people; all his Saints are in thine hand, they sat down at thy feet, every one shall receive of thy words, Moses commanded us a law:* he always directed 'em to a greater than himself.

Deut. xxxiv. 10.

Heb. iii. 2.

Deut. xxxiii. 3, 4.

The people once made choice of him for a *Mediator*; *Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say, and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee, and we will hear it and do it.* But did he take this honour to himself? No, he makes an advantage of the peoples desire to have a middle person between God and them, and upon that tells 'em of our blessed Saviour. You find the prophecy connected to that

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very case. *The Lord thy God will raise up to thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto* HIM *shall ye hearken: According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly, saying, let me not hear the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more lest I die. And the Lord said unto me, they have well spoken, in that they have spoken, I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee.* This is a passage that the new Testament makes great use of. The Apostle *Peter* pleads from it, that God *had sent Jesus, who before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must receive till the times of the restitution of all things, which God has spoken of by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began: For Moses truly said unto the Fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatever he shall say unto you.* So the martyr *Stephen*, when he had given an account of the great things that *Moses* had done, by how many changes, and thro' how many contradictions he was form'd to the deliverance of the people out of *Egypt*, he fixes on that one point, *This is that Moses who said unto the children of Israel, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you.*

Deut. xviii. 15, 16, 17.

Acts iii. 20, 21, 22.

Acts vii. 37.

So that upon the whole you find tho' *Moses* had such a commission as was never equall'd, and those credentials that were never exceeded, yet still he referr'd the people to one above, and beyond himself, one that was their *God*, and who in the fulness of time would be their *prophet*. Now you will observe, tho' the Apostle gives it as a noble character of Christ, that *he was faithful to him that appointed him, even as Moses was faithful in all his house*; yet he adds, *This man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses*; not upon account of faithfulness, for that an inferior may have equally with a superior.

Heb. iii. 2, 3.

A man

A man whom you trust with twenty shillings is as honest as one that manages a concern of ten thousand pounds; as *Moses* is said to be faithful in all things, so *in that* he could not be exceeded. SERM. XXXIV.

But Christ is *worthy of more glory* upon another account, from the dignity of his person, *inasmuch as he that builded the house has more honour than the house.* By his house is meant his people, his church, the whole family, both in heaven and earth. *Moses* was only a servant to those, and therefore could have no more than his particular share with them; but Christ having built the whole house, has more honour than all of it put together, than the whole assembly of Saints and Angels, whose names are written in heaven. And can this be conceived of a creature? No, *Every house is built by some man, but he that built all things is* GOD. ver. 4.

Christ is said to be this *builder* in the former verse; and to shew us of *what nature* that is to be understood, he calls him *a God* in this. *Moses was verily faithful in all his house as a servant,* i. e. he fulfilled his orders; he did every thing according to the pattern shew'd him in the mount, but this was *for a testimony of those things that were to be spoken after.* Now *Christ is a Son over his* OWN *house, whose house we are.* It could not be said of *Moses* that the *Israelites* were his. When God tells him, *Thy people* whom thou broughtest out of *Egypt* have rebell'd, he returned the relative term back again, *Lord, they are* THY *people and thy inheritance whom* THOU *hast purchased for thy self:* and so he saith in another place, *Have I conceiv'd all this people at once?* But Christ calls the house *his own,* and who must this be? 5. 6.

Well, the Apostle applies to him that passage out of the xcvth *Psalm, Harden not your hearts in the provocation, and the day of temptation in the wilderness;* as they did who are said to tempt Christ, ver. 3.

SERM. XXXIV. ver. 12. and then concludes thus, *Take heed, brethren, leſt there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.* I take theſe characters to be join'd, or otherwiſe I can ſee no force in his argument, and no propriety in his quotation. He who is ſaid to be the *builder of all things, the builder of his houſe,* the *Son over his own houſe* is at laſt called *the living God,* not by obſcure and uncertain conſequences, but in the plain and natural language of Scripture.

Let none ſay that we affirm this without the authority of the Bible, or that it comes in among the things that man's wiſdom teaches. 'Tis as plainly a doctrine that *the Holy Ghoſt teaches* as any can be, and appears ſo to every one who will compare ſpiritual things with ſpiritual. Do we call him your only Saviour who is not your God? No, we dare not. The work that he has done *for* you, and muſt do *in* you, is too great and good for any thing but divinity, and therefore the titles are join'd, he is *a juſt God, and a Saviour, and there is none beſides him. David's defence was of God,* which may be underſtood of a temporal deliverance; and is *our* greateſt happineſs from a creature? No, we have very noble notions of a Deity from our intereſt in him; for *our God is the God of ſalvation, and to God the Lord belong the iſſues from death.* Pſal. lxviii. 20.

Compare ſuch titles as theſe with what is ſaid of Chriſt, that *there is ſalvation in no other;* upon which account he goes by that name, for all the ends of the earth ſhall ſee *the ſalvation of our God!* Iſa. lii. 10. So good old *Simeon* ſaith, *Now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace; for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation; which thou haſt prepared before the face of all people: A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Iſrael.* Your ſalvation is of that Lord who made heaven and earth; and who is this, but Luke ii. 29, 30.

the

the ſame, who being made perfect from his ſuffer- SERM.
ings, *became the author of eternal ſalvation to as ma-* XXXIV.
ny as obey him? Thus he is plac'd as *the ſalvation in Zion for Iſrael his glory.* What's got by talking of a Saviour who is not a God? We loſe our hope, and he his praiſe: But I truſt *you have not ſo learned Chriſt.* You may ſay of him in whom your confidence is plac'd. *This is our God for ever and* Pſal. xlviii. *ever, and he ſhall be our guide even until death.* 14.

3. Believing in Chriſt Jeſus, is relying upon the *righteouſneſs* that he has brought in. We find that none can ſtand in God's ſight *when once he is angry*, and *marks iniquity*, and this we are ſure he does. *Thou ſetteſt our iniquities before thee, our ſecret ſins* Pſal. xc. 8. *in the light of thy countenance.* Here we have nothing to flee to but *the blood of ſprinkling.* It's called ſo from that which was typical of it under the old Teſtament, *Heb.* ix. 19, 21. You there ſee how far the virtue of it was extended; *When he had ſpoken every precept, he took the blood of calves and goats, and ſprinkled both the book and all the people.* He ſprinkled the book to bring the law within the covenant of grace, to take away the curſe that was in it, and continues upon all thoſe that are under it. He ſprinkled the people to take off their guilt, that they might be purify'd from an evil conſcience. Nay, it is ſaid, he ſprinkled with blood the *tabernacle, and all the veſſels of the miniſtry*; and in particular we read, that he threw ſome of this blood upon the *mercy-ſeat*, which was ſuppos'd to be the throne of God, and upon the *tabernacle* which was his houſe, and upon the *veſſels of the miniſtry* which were his furniture, to ſhew that heaven it ſelf muſt be render'd propitious by an atonement or ſatisfaction; and theſe, as the Apoſtle tells us, were *patterns of things in the heavens:* But ſaith he, *The heavenly things themſelves*, the real happineſs, and all the grace that leads to it, *were to be purified with*

better

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better sacrifices than these. And what are they? Christ has by his own blood *gone into the holiest of all, to appear in the presence of God for us.*

That he who died was a man, a partaker of flesh and blood, is true enough; for that reason he was *in all things made like unto his brethren, that by death he might subdue him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.* Our nature was needful to make his dying a *reality*, but whence did it derive the merit to make it a *satisfaction*? This supposes another nature that is without any robbery *equal to God!* And his obedience to death, even the death of the cross, could be only valid to his own glory and our happiness from the antecedent dig-

Heb. i. 3. nity of his person. *Being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, he did by himself purge away our sins.*

So that when we read of his sufferings in the most pathetic terms, that he was broken, griev-

Isa. liii. 8. ed, *taken from prison, and from judgment*, there's this thrown in, *who shall declare his generation?* 'Twas an easy matter to trace his family, that he was of the seed of *David* according to the flesh; and therefore that's not the generation which the prophet speaks of as a matter not to be declared. For he would say himself, *Ye know who I am, and whence I came, but he who sent me is true whom ye*

Pro. xxx. 4. *know not. Who has ascended up into heaven, or descended? who has gathered the wind in his fists? who has bound the waters in a garment? who has established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, declare if thou canst tell?*

What would the smiting of the shepherd have signified, if the sword had not been directed by God against *the man that was his fellow?* and why should he be call'd God's *righteous servant* at the time

time that it *pleased the Father to bruise him, and put him to grief?* Why should it be said, *By his knowledge shall he justify many*, when the way of his doing it is *bearing their iniquity?* His death was soon over, and how came he in that to bring in *an everlasting righteousness?* The virtue was not in his sufferings but in his person, and therefore it is said, *This is the name whereby he shall be call'd Jehovah our righteousness.* As *Jehovah* he must live for ever, as our righteousness he was obliged to die. For *he put away sin by the offering of himself.* He who was crucified must be a man, he who by *that* brought in a righteousness must be *Jehovah.* It appears by this, that he who paid the price was equal to him that receiv'd it.

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Jer. xxiii. 6.

That objection is only a sound, that if he who made the satisfaction was a God, then the same person both gave it and took it. This proves that what we speak of is a *mystery*, but it does not for that cease to be a *truth*; for the same argument lies almost against every thing in religion. Is our grace and duty any thing else but what God both gives and receives? *All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.* Is it not said as plainly as it can be in words, that Christ *presents us to himself?* and therefore the objection that some are so proud of, is but a flash of powder that makes a blaze, but does no execution. There is no more contradiction in this than there is in all the other articles of religion, that he who gives the satisfaction is also to take it. *God reconciles us to himself,* he is both the reconciler and the person reconciled. Be not driven away *from the hope of the Gospel* by the vain splutter of men. This is a poor *wind of doctrine* indeed, and none but meer *children* can be carried away with it. But to return to my argument.

1 Chron. xxix. 14.

Eph. v. 27.

2 Cor. v. 18.

Why

SERM. XXXIV. Why should he who is our righteousness be called *Jehovah*? The name is incommunicable, and belongs to none but the Most High. Angels are [1 Cor. viii. 2. call'd Gods, and so are magistrates. *There are lords many, and gods many*; but *thou whose name alone is* Ps. lxxxiii. 18. JEHOVAH *art the Most High over all the earth.* If this is given to a creature, we cannot say that his name *alone* is *Jehovah*. And the Scripture by throwing titles about with so much confusion, has left us no distinction between God and a creature. But you may be sure, as God will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain, so the holy Spirit would not be guilty of that crime. Tho' in bringing in a righteousness Christ submitted to death, yet he did it in the quality of *Jehovah*, the great original, the fundamental life and being.

There is an answer, such a one as 'tis, to this argument, That the church is call'd *the Lord our righteousness*. She is so indeed, and I need do no more than read you the passage, and leave you to Jer. xxxiii. 15, 16. judge with what propriety it is pleaded. *In those days, and at that time, I will cause the branch of righteousness to grow up unto David, and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah shall be saved, and Jerusalem dwell safely; and this is the name wherewith she shall be called the Lord our righteousness.* I ought to make an apology for giving an answer to this argument. 'Tis obvious to every one, that the title must be understood of Christ, and can only be applied to his people on the account of their relation to Isa. xlix. 3 him. As he is call'd *Israel*, and God is call'd *Ja-* Psal. xxiv. 6. *cob*, so they are call'd the Lord our righteousness. But there is one thing more that I shall observe from those words, and that is, the new Testament Church is here describ'd by the profession they were to make of their faith in one who is *Jehovah*,

vah, and one who is their righteousness; and therefore when people shuffle with his divinity, and deny his satisfaction, they are not that *Judah* and *Jerusalem* who are call'd by the name. SERM. XXXIV.

4. Believing is *deriving* from him a principle of grace. Christ *dwells in our hearts by faith.* He *quickens those who were dead in trespasses and sins*, and how should he do this, if he had not *the fulness of him who fills all in all?* This is all along represented as the chief creation, compared to the *exceeding greatness of God's power in raising Christ from the dead*, and would never be attributed to any agent but one who does according to his pleasure. And the Apostle who writes to a people that had this experience lets them know, that their friend is no less than the most High. They *are born of the uncorruptible seed, the word of God, who lives and abides for ever.* Whether you understand this of Christ the personal Word, or of the everlasting Gospel, 'tis all one to the argument: That which he puts the advantage upon is their having *tasted that the* LORD *is gracious.* Eph. i. ult. ii. 1. 1 Pet. i. 23. ii. 3.

This you know is an old Testament phrase, a way of speaking that God's people have always us'd. *O taste and see that the Lord is good. David* cannot be supposed to design by this Lord any other than him whom he had in heaven alone, and besides whom he could desire none upon earth. And what Lord is that whom the Apostle saith they had tasted to be gracious? One whom they were still to *come to as a living stone, disallowed of men, but chosen of God and precious.* These later words make it evident, that it can be understood of none but *Christ*, as the former make it equally evident, it can be understood of none but *God.* Now why are these Scriptures laid so near, and the connection made so strong, if one sentence refers to the supreme Being, and the other to a person that's deriv'd and dependent? Ps. xxxiv. 8. 1 Pet. ii. 4.

These

SERM. XXXV. These arguments have swell'd beyond my first design, but I could not baulk them: I bless God my soul is in this cause, which is so dear, that I hope no reproaches will ever move me; and if I should *suffer the loss of all things*, divine grace can teach me to despise them, for *the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.*

Aug 30. 1719.

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5. YOU have also heard, that believing in Christ is drawing down farther supplies of grace and holiness from him. *I am come*, saith he, *that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly*; so that your advance in religion sometimes goes by the name of conversion, it is call'd Christ's being *formed in you*. For this the Apostle *travail'd in birth* over those who were his children before. The thing that he desired with so many throws and wishes was, that *Christ might be form'd in them*, which would not be understood of their first religion, for that was begun already; but he speaks of the improvements hey were to make in it as if it was a new conversion. When *David* begs to be restor'd to the use of his graces, he does it by a word that might signify the first implanting of them, *Create in me a clean heart, O God.*

Joh. x. 10. Gal. iii. 19. Ps. li. 10.

Thus was Christ to be formed in these people. Every communication that he made of himself to 'em was like beginning the work over again. We

are still to be *transformed by the renewing of our minds;* we ought daily to *put off the old man, and be renew'd in the spirit of our minds.* Now it shews us the necessity of a dependence upon him, that we do not only receive from him the principles of a divine life, but it's he that gives it all the enlargment that it can have. *Unto those that fear his name does the Son of righteousness arise with healing in his wings, that they may go forth and grow up as calves of the stall.* From him we have the perfecting of the saints and the edifying of the body.

SER M. XXXV. Rom. xii. 2. Eph. iv. 22, 23. Mal. iv. 2.

And what can this proclaim him to be, but a God? We can say it of none besides an infinite nature, *With thee is the fountain of life.* This was one of the noblest apprehensions that could be conveyed into the minds of men, and what the Apostle opens as superior to all the doctrines of idolatry, that *in God we live, and move, and have our being;* that it was he who *made of one blood all nations of men that dwell upon the face of the earth;* that *we are his offspring.* Now there's a greater life than this deriv'd from our Saviour, that which is more glorious in itself, and more important to those that have it, as we are told by the Evangelist, *In him was life, and that life was the light of men.* It led them to the knowledge of the truth, it breath'd into them the principles of an heavenly joy; and this life is said to be in *him* as the fountain where it sprung and from whence it came. It is not enough to say, that this life was *by him* as a friend who took care to give it, in pursuance of a commission; no, he is infinitely more than a trustee, for it is *in him.* Thus the same writer tells us in his epistle, *This is the record, that God has given to us eternal life; and this life is* IN HIS SON: *He that has the Son has life.*

Psal. xxxvi. 10. Act. xvii. 26. Joh. i. 4. 1 Joh. v. 11, 12.

Let us compare these accounts of a Redeemer with the sermon to the *Athenians* about the great God.

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God. The Apoſtle *Paul* took it for granted, that he had no better argument for the worſhip of a Deity than this, that *he gives life, and breath, and all things.* By doing that, he was diſtinguiſhed from all creatures both in heaven and earth. This could never be affirmed of any but the ſupreme Being. And can a *natural* life have no other author than a God, and ſhall that which is *ſpiritual* be produc'd by a deputed deity? No, *This is the true God, and this is eternal life.* When Chriſt tells us that we muſt *abide in him,* and that *without him we can do nothing,* he mentions greater obligations and a more intimate dependence than we can have for the life that we live in the fleſh.

1 Joh. v. 20.

Joh. xv. 4, 5.

Col. ii. 19. *He is the head of the body,* and from him all the members deriving the nouriſhment that is miniſtred to them *increaſe with the increaſe of God.* This phraſe tells us the author of the increaſe as well as the nature of it. For tho' the name of *God* in a Hebraiſm very often ſignifies no more than what is great and noble, yet it's a meer fraud and ſhift to bring ſuch an expoſition into this place. Suppoſe we ſhould uſe the ſame device in ſpeaking of the righteouſneſs of God, and the grace of God, what murdering work ſhould we make in the chief articles of our religion? But as the righteouſneſs of God is a righteouſneſs that God brings in, and ſtands in oppoſition to that which is our own; and as the grace of God is a principle that God implants, and of which he is the author, ſo this *increaſe of God* is what he gives. He from whom it is derived can be no other than a God, and yet we *grow up unto him in all things who is the head, even Chriſt.* As in one place Chriſt is ſaid to begin a good work in you, ſo in another you are expreſly told, that *he who has wrought you for the ſelf ſame thing is God.*

Eph. iv. 15.

What

What creature could say as our Lord did to the woman of *Samaria? If thou hadst known who said unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and* HE *would have given thee living water.* Tho' that was a metaphorical expression, yet what he says afterwards is open enough: *The water that I give is a well of water springing up to everlasting life.* If all the Angels in heaven cannot give wings to a flie, or breath to a worm; if it is purely the work of a God to *quicken the dead;* if he is our life, and the length of our days, is there any room to suppose that the concerns of a life more divine and glorious will be lodg'd with a creature?

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Joh. iv. 10.

And yet all the advance that a believer makes in holiness is ascrib'd to *Jesus* as the Apostle says, who was both a minister and a witness of the Christian religion: *The life I live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* His faith was that by which he maintain'd this life; and Christ being the object of this faith, was the Person from whom he had all supplies given him. 'Tis only a God who *holds our souls in* a natural *life*; and what must he be who can answer all the cries and demands of a spiritual life? who *causes those that love him to inherit substance, and fills all their treasures?* The eyes of all things wait on the Supreme Being, to be *upheld by the word of his power.* 'Tis he that hears the young ravens when they cry; *the lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.* And does the believer seek the bread that endures to everlasting life from one that is less than a God? Is grace maintain'd by a lower friend than nature? Is our *breath in the hands of God,* for a life that is but a span? and can one, who by nature is no God, be sufficient for a life that is eternal? No, when you read of your being built up on your most holy faith, and

Gal. ii. 20.

Pro. viii. 21.

Dan. v. 23.

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that the body *makes increaſe to the edifying of itſelf in love*, tho' theſe bleſſings come from Chriſt, you may be ſure that *the builder and maker* is no other than *God*.

Jude 18. Eph. iv. 16.

One of the greateſt notions that we can have of the Father, is that *he has life in himſelf*, and we are told in the ſame verſe, that *he has given to the Son to have life in himſelf*; and *as the Father raiſes up the dead, and quickens 'em, ſo the Son quickens whom he will.* There's nothing in the expreſſion of *giving this to him*, that can diminiſh the thing of *having life in himſelf.* It ſignifies as much in one part of the verſe, as it does in the other. Either he that has life in himſelf is God, or otherwiſe it gives us but a lower conception of the Father. It declares an independence on any ſuperior. He that has one above him, cannot have *life in himſelf:* and therefore by giving it to him here, we muſt underſtand no more than his proclaiming that Chriſt ſhould have it in his union to our nature, that he would have us to know the Son of man is no leſs than God. There's no creature in heaven or earth, but as they are receivers and poſſeſſors of life, ſo they cannot be ſaid to have it *in themſelves;* for that is peculiar to an author, and we can apply it to no other than the great *Preſerver of men:* and yet here it is affirm'd of Chriſt, which proves that he is the *brightneſs of his Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his Perſon*, becauſe *he upholds all things by the word of his power.* He has, more eſpecially in the religious world, created all things, and for his pleaſure they are and were created.

Joh. v. 26.

Heb. i. 2, 3.

6. Believing in Chriſt is regarding him as our *Comforter* in every time of need. This is ſometimes applied to the Father: *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of mercies, and the God of all conſolations, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them*

2 Cor. i. 3, 4.

who

who are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourſelves are comforted of God. Sometimes it's repreſented as the work of the Spirit, *I will pray the Father,* ſaith Chriſt, *and he will give you another Comforter, who ſhall abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth.* Hence we read of *a joy in the holy Ghoſt. We are ſeal'd with the good Spirit of promiſe;* and, as you have already heard, our Lord takes it to himſelf. SERM. XXXV. Joh. xiv. 16, 17. Rom. xiv. 16. Eph. i. 13.

Now, whoever it is that can ſet the believer above his fears, and give him a peace and joy, does by that proclaim a Divine Nature. It is *God who comforts them that are caſt down. Elihu* admires this power of a Deity, *When he ſpeaks quietneſs, who can give trouble?* and *David* cannot be ſuppos'd to beg it from any other, *Make me to hear joy and gladneſs, that the bones which thou haſt broken may rejoyce. The Lord raiſes up them that are bow'd down, He heals the broken in heart, and binds up their wounds.* This *Lord ſhall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion.* 2 Cor. xii. 6. Job xxxiv. 29. Pſal. li. 8. cxlvi. 8, 10. cxlvii. 3.

Now, upon all occaſions, our Saviour tells the diſciples, that HE *would not leave 'em comfortleſs. In the world they ſhall have trouble, but in* HIM *they muſt have peace.* There was ſomething in his way of dealing out this favour, that ſhew'd him to be God: *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world gives, give I unto you.* He is known to his people by theſe diſtributions: they that receive his kindneſs, are able to diſtinguiſh it from all that creatures can do; *for he has made his wonderful works to be remember'd.* Joh. xiv. 18. xvi. 33. xiv. 27. Pſal. cxi. 4.

From this the Apoſtle *John* argues all along for the ſupport of Chriſtians under the rage of enemies, and the treachery of Apoſtates, when many Antichriſts had gone out into the world. You ſee, that he leads 'em to a ſenſe, and an improvement of their union to Chriſt. Thus he pleads, *Now we are* 1 Joh. iii.

SERM. XXXV. *the sons of* GOD, *and it does not appear what we shall be; but when he shall appear, we shall be like* HIM, *for we shall see him as he is:* Him, that is, the God
ver. 3. whose sons we are. To this he adds, *Every one who has this hope in him purifies himself even as* HE *is pure, i. e.* the God of all purity, to whom they are related. And who this is you find afterwards, *Ye know that* HE *was manifest to take away our sins.* These words bring it to our Saviour, and agree to the language of my text, *that God was manifest in the flesh.* So again, in the next chapter he joins
iv. 4. these two together, *Ye are of* GOD, *little children, and have overcome 'em, i. e.* the false prophets who are gone out into the world; *for greater is* HE *that is in you, than he that is in the world.* He that is said to be in them, is our blessed Saviour, who had overcome the world. His being *in them*, agrees to
Joh xvii. 23. all the language of Scripture, *I in them, and thou in me, Christ in you the hope of glory.*
Col. i. 27. Now this is true of the Divine Nature; for *God dwells in us, and we in him.* Certainly this phrase of a Being that dwells in men, ought not to be us'd without any distinction, and given out promiscuously both to God and a creature. *David* means no other than a Deity, when he says, *In the*
Psal. xciv. 19. *multitude of my thoughts within me,* THY *comforts delight my soul.* And does the Apostle derive it from any lower hands? No, these were *comforts*
2 Cor. i. 3. *wherewith they were comforted of* GOD; and yet in the very next verse he tells us, that as *the sufferings of Christ abound in us, our consolation abounds by* CHRIST. And afterwards saith, *The people were his rejoicing, as he was theirs in the day of the Lord Jesus.*
Isa. ix. 7. Our Saviour has *the government upon his shoulders, and of the increase of his government and peace, there shall be no end.* He gave *Saul* his commission,
Acts xxvi. 18. with a promise that he would *deliver him from the people*

people and the Gentiles, to whom he sent him. And as he had met with a long experience of this protection, he tells *Agrippa, Having therefore obtained help from God, I continue to this day.* The word *therefore* refers us to the former promise. It was Christ that told him, that HE would deliver him: well, he had done so, and this the Apostle calls an obtaining help from *God.* Christ appear'd to him at *Corinth,* and gave him an assurance, *No man shall set on thee to hurt thee.* And there's nothing in *Paul*'s language that obliges us to exclude Christ from the account we have of his deliverance at sea: *There stood by me,* saith he, *the Angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve.* All the Angels are ministring Spirits to our Lord, and *by him* sent forth to the heirs of salvation.

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ver. 20.

Acts xviii. 10.

xxvii. 23.

But the comforts that he gives to his people are of a more inward kind; and these can be no other than the work of a God. 'Tis the *joy of the Lord that must be our strength.* 'Tis he who, when the outward man decays, *renews us in the inward man day by day. We always bear about with us the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be manifest in our body:* that made them, when they were *troubled on every side, not be distressed, when they were perplex'd, they were not in despair;* because, say they, *We who live are always deliver'd to death for Jesus sake, that the life also of Jesus may be manifest in our mortal flesh.* Now this is more than a creature can do; for, as he tells us there, *the excellency of the power was to be of God, and not of them.*

2 Cor. iv. 10.

How could our Lord say to the disciples, *Yet a little while, and ye see me no more; and again, Yet a little while, and ye shall see me.* In the former sentence, he plainly refers to their losing of his body; they were to know Christ no more after the flesh, but the latter is to be understood of a Divine presence. And was this fit for any to say but the

Joh. xvi. 16.

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Supreme Being? *Don't I fill heaven and earth, ſaith the Lord?* How ſhould he ſay the world ſees me no more, *but ye ſee me, and becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo?* This is more than any of the Saints can ſay: As the world does not ſee them, ſo neither do they ſee the church; they live, and we live alſo, but the one is not the cauſe of the other. Does not this argue an omnipreſence? that heaven is not only the place from whence we *look* for a Saviour to judge the world, but from whence we *feel* one? And how can it be ſaid of any leſs than a God, *that he went far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.*

Eph. iv. 10.

7. If we believe in Chriſt, we ſhall declare it by an *obedience* to him in all manner of converſation. *To me,* ſaith the Apoſtle, *to live is Chriſt.* And is it not too much to have this ſaid of a creature? The notion we have of religion is this, that a man *lives his time in the fleſh, not to the luſts of men, but to the will of God. The Lord made all things for himſelf; of him, and to him, and thro' him, are all things.* And more eſpecially in the nobler work of redemption he has declar'd himſelf to be the great end of the whole contrivance, *We are to the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved. None of us lives to himſelf, and no man dies to himſelf; but whether we live, we live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether therefore we live or die, we are the Lord's.* Can there be any words that expreſs ſo full a ſurrender as this? and muſt it be made to any beſides the great God? and yet you ſee what Lord he means in the next words, *For to this end Chriſt both died and roſe again, and reviv'd, that he might be the Lord both of dead and living.* Where can you find expreſſions of duty that are more ſignificant? *What can David ſay more to thee, O Lord God?*

Phil. i. 21.

1 Pet. iv. 2.

Rom. xi. 36.

Eph. i. 6.

Rom. xiv. 7, 8.

Nothing farther can be ſaid of our obedience to the Moſt High. The Apoſtle tells 'em, *Whether*

we are beſides ourſelves, it is to GOD, *i. e.* for his ſervice; or *whether we be ſober*, it is for your cauſe. What God is it, that all their zeal is directed to? You will learn his meaning from the next words that come in as an argument, *for the love of* CHRIST *conſtrains us, who died for all, that they who live ſhould not live unto themſelves, but to* HIM *that died for 'em and roſe again.* What *David* may be ſuppos'd to ſay to the Father, theſe Apoſtles ſay to the Son: *Truly I am thy ſervant, I am thy ſervant.* And can the profeſſion be directed to any but the ſame infinite Nature? *One ſhall ſay I am the Lord's, and another ſhall ſubſcribe with his hand to the Lord. Thus ſaith the Lord the King of Iſrael, and his Redeemer the Lord of hoſts, I am the firſt, and I am the laſt, and beſides me there is no God.*

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2 Cor. v. 13. ver. 14, 15. Pſal. cxvi. 16. Iſa. xliv. 5, 6.

8. They that believe in Chriſt give him a religious *worſhip:* and as that is the greateſt thing we can do in this world, ſo let it not be ſaid that *we worſhip we know not what. Heaven and earth ſhall paſs away before one tittle* of the law does, and eſpecially that in the firſt and ſecond commandment: *Thou ſhalt have no other Gods before me.* 'Tis no matter for a creature's having the name of a God: *Thou ſhalt not make to thyſelf the likeneſs of any thing in heaven above, as well as in the earth beneath; thou ſhalt not bow down thyſelf unto 'em:* not only to the likeneſs that thou makeſt of 'em, for that muſt be a ſtupid idolatry indeed; but there is *none in heaven above*, before whom thou muſt bow down and worſhip; *for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God.*

Mat. v. 17. Exod. xx. 5, 6.

If the Goſpel had not repreſented Chriſt as a God, I ſhould never have dar'd to get over the prohibition of this law. He himſelf gives no anſwer but this to Satan, *It is written, thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.* So that, he refuſes to fall down before him, not merely becauſe he is a devil, but becauſe he is a

Mat. iv. 10.

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creature. And what he ſaith to him, would have been as proper to the brighteſt Angel in heaven. The Angel forbid *John* to do it upon this very ground, *Worſhip thou God.* No excellency of nature, no engagement of kindneſs, can make any perſon the object of our devotion. When we are call'd to *fall down and worſhip*, it is *before the Lord our Maker.* And,

Rev. xxii. 10.

Pſal. xcv. 7.

Upon no other conſideration could we read of worſhiping the Son: the Angels of God are charg'd to *worſhip him*; and the reaſon is plain, because *by him were all things created, whether they be in heaven or on earth; thrones, principalities, dominions and powers, all are created by him and for him.* The world below are call'd to do it, becauſe *the world was made by him.* His people do it, becauſe *he is the Author and Finiſher of their faith.* The church of the firſt-born, whoſe names are written in heaven, fall down before him who ſits on the throne, and before the Lamb, becauſe they are *his houſe, and he that has built 'em is God.*

Heb. i. 6. Col. i. 16 Joh. i. 10. Heb. xii. 2. iii. 4.

The Scripture has put a great value upon your doing any thing in the name of God: *All people will walk every one in the name of his God, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.* Chriſt uſes the ſame language in a gracious promiſe: *Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midſt of 'em.* That phraſe *in my name* is us'd about the greateſt ſolemnities in religion. This, I think, is too much for a creature, according to that profeſſion of the church, *Other Lords beſides thee have had dominion over us, but by thee only will we make mention of thy name. The deſire of our ſoul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.* But not to force the word beyond the neceſſary meaning, who could make ſuch a promiſe, *That where two or three are met together, there am I in the midſt of 'em.* Here obſerve two things:

Mic. iv. 5. Mat. xviii. 20. Iſa. xxvi. 8.

Firſt,

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First, This comes in as the reason of what he had told 'em before; that *if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for 'em of my Father who is in heaven, for I am in the midst of 'em.* Does not this prove that he and the Father are one? Why is *his* being in the midst of 'em an argument that the Father will hear 'em? but besides that,

Secondly, He here talks in the language of a God. He does not say *I will* come down to 'em, *I will* bow the heavens, and come down; no, but *I am* in the midst of 'em, antecedent to their desire. 'Tis true, these words do not *mention* an omnipresence, because his being among them signifies more than his being with the wicked; but they *suppose* it. How can it be true that he should be present with so many thousands of their assemblies; or you may call 'em conventicles if you please; a good thing is never the worse for a hateful word? How shall he make good his promise to the vast numbers that are met together in his name, if it was not He of whom *David* saith, *Whither shall I flee from thy Spirit, or go from thy presence?* He is call'd indeed *the branch of the Lord*, that should be *beautiful and glorious*, and we read *of the fruit of the earth that shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.* This supposes his taking upon him the human nature; but nothing less than a Divine Nature can make good what we read afterwards, that *the Lord will create upon every dwelling place upon Mount Sion*, let there be never so many thousands of 'em, *and upon all her assemblies, a cloud of smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night*; that is, he will be actually and effectually present with every church under the new Testament, as he was with *the church in the wilderness.* And how is this possible, if his name was not *excellent in all the earth, and his glory above the heavens?*

Ps. cxxxix. 12.

Isa. iv. 1.

ver. 5.

Psal. viii. 1.

'Tis

SERM. XXXV. 'Tis in vain for any to deny the truth of his being among us, becauſe we cannot explain it. Nothing has more the air of darkneſs and arrogance, than to object, againſt the *reality* of a thing, the difficulty there is in the *manner* of it. Thus the doctrine of the Trinity is us'd. The men that oppoſe it do not demand of you a proof, but an explication, and imagine with contempt enough, that becauſe you're at a loſs in the one, ſo you muſt be in the other. The preſence of Chriſt with his aſſemblies is one of thoſe *myſterious certainties* that we are to believe, tho' we cannot unfold the way of it.

I need not lead you into Divinity for ſeveral matters which have the greateſt evidence that they are ſo, and yet the greateſt obſcurity how they come to be ſo. *Doſt thou know the ballancings of the clouds? Canſt thou tell how thy garments are warm when he quiets the earth with his ſouth wind? Haſt thou enter'd into the ſprings of the ſea, or haſt thou walked in the ſearch of the depth? Knoweſt thou the ordinances of heaven, or canſt thou ſet the dominion thereof upon the earth?* and yet, can you deny theſe things? *Thou knoweſt not the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child*; and yet thou muſt be a very aukward creature to ſay there is no ſuch thing. But ſo it is, that perſons who are puzzled with a worm are impatient to be told that they cannot know a God!

Job xxxvii. 16, 17. xxxviii. 16. Eccleſ. xi. 7.

9. Believing in Chriſt is truſting him for a future protection, to carry us thro' all our dangers: *The Lord ſhall preſerve us from every evil work, and bring us to his heavenly kingdom.* And who is this Lord? I anſwer, *You're preſerv'd in Chriſt Jeſus, and call'd.* He *that lov'd the church, and gave himſelf for it is to preſent it to himſelf, as a holy church without ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing.* *David* expected this from no other than God, *Thou wilt guide me*

2 Tim. iv. 18. Jude 1. Eph. v. 27.

by

by thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to thy glory. And to shew that there was but One who could do this, he adds, *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there's none upon earth whom I desire besides Thee. My flesh and my heart fails; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. We commit the keeping of our souls to a faithful Creator.* SERM. XXXV. Ps. lxxiii. 24, 25, 26. 1 Pet. iv. ult.

And yet the Apostle directs our hope to the great Redeemer: *We look for the mercy of the Lord Jesus to eternal life.* And having spoke of that, he concludes with this doxology: *Now unto him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever, Amen.* His ability to keep us from falling is what the Scripture has abundantly testified; *He is able to save to the uttermost.* His presenting us before his own glory agrees to what is said of him in several other places, *Behold I and the children whom God has given me.* And the Apostle calls him that does it by the name of the only wise God our Saviour. He represents these things as fit for none but a God to do; and therefore as they belong to Christ, he is the only wise God our Saviour, to whom be glory for ever, *Amen*

Jude 19. ver. 24, 25. Heb. vii. 25. ii. 13.

SERMON

Sept. 13, 1719.

SERMON XXXVI.

SERM. XXXVI.

10. BELIEVING in Christ Jesus is LOOKING to him as the *Finisher* of our faith, who will give a completeness to his own work. I choose to express this great act of the soul upon a death-bed, in the language that God has cloath'd it with; and it agrees to all those phrases by which good people have deliver'd their notions of a true Gospel-faith. Thus in the old Testament, believing in Christ was for *all the ends of the earth to look to him and be sav'd.* And the conversion of the *Jews* is laid down in those terms, *They shall look unto him whom they have pierced.*

Isa. xlv. 22.

Zech. xii. 10.

'Tis true, we read of an opposition between faith and sight; the former, by which we walk, gives us the limitations we are under in this world, and the latter opens out the liberty and glory of the next. But yet faith has in it the nature of vision, tho' it is here distinguish'd from it. 'Tis said of those that receiv'd Christ, which is explain'd by their *believing in his name,* that *they beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father.* The faith of *Moses* is deliver'd to us in those words, that *he endur'd as seeing him who is invisible.*

Joh. i. 13, 14.

Heb. xi. 27.

So that, you observe this is the language both of the old and new Testament; and what they are us'd to who build upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets. Tho' believing is distinguish'd from seeing,

seeing, yet it's very often expres'd by it. To which end we read, that *as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up*, that as by looking at the one, so by believing in the other, they might find an healing virtue: *They looked to him, and were lighten'd. Him has God set forth to be a propitiation for our sins.* The first act of our faith is a closing with that call, *I said, Behold me, behold me.* And the last look we take is to One who will give the great perfection to his own image, and *present us without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, before his glory with exceeding joy.* Now, 'tis to Jesus that we thus look, as *the Author and Finisher of our faith.* We consider the cloud of witnesses in which we are encircled and encompass'd about as so many examples; but our eyes are upon HIM as the efficient of what we *are* and what we *shall be.*

SERM. XXXVI. Joh. iii. 16. Ps. xxxiv. 5. Rom. iii. 25. Isa. lxv. 1. Eph. v. 27.

And who can this be but the most high *God?* The Scripture has directed us to no other than an Almighty Agent, either for the working of faith in us, or carrying it on *with power*, or raising it to felicity and vision. We read of the *exceeding greatness of his power towards them that believe. David* saith, *The Lord will perfect that which concerns me, and not forsake the work of his own hands, because his mercy endures for ever.* The Apostle saith in the most positive terms, *He that has wrought us for the self-same thing is God. He that establisheth us in Christ, and has anointed us is God, who has also seal'd us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.* It is *God who fulfils in us all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power.* They that believe in Christ, are *born of God*; and he who has begun this good work, will perform it to the day of Christ Jesus: *All things are of God, who has reconcil'd us to himself*; that is, all those things that make us new creatures.

Eph. i. 19. Ps. xxxviii. ult. 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. 2 Thes. i. 11. 1 Joh. v. 1, 4. 2 Cor. v. 17.

Now,

SERM. XXXVI. Now, what is performing the thing that he has begun, but that he will be the *Finisher*, who has been the *Author* of our faith? that he will fulfil
2 Thes. i. 12. the work of faith with power, *that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him?*

Christ is the governor both of grace and nature;
Rev. i. 18. *he has the keys of death*, and of the invisible state. 'Tis by the turn of his hand that we are let out of one world into another; and it is also by him, that the better life, which is here begun, rises into that life that was its pattern, and will be its end. And is not this too much for a creature to do?

Can a believer have his last confidence in one who is not God, and go out of the world under the hazard and appearance of idolatry? *David* durst trust himself with none but an infinite Being, *In-*
Ps. xxxi. 6. *to thy hands do I commit my spirit, Lord God of truth, for thou hast redeemed it.* This is the employment of faith, in which every good man is to follow him. They are to die in that way, who *die in the Lord*; for they *all die in faith.* And I can never think that a true believer will stop at any thing short of what they depended on; our faith and hope are to be in a God as well as *David's*. We have none in heaven but God; 'tis He who
Ps. lxxiii. 25. made with the sweet Psalmist of *Israel a new and everlasting covenant*, which was *all his salvation.*
2 Sam. xxiii. 5. *Stephen's* faith was thus employ'd, who *call'd on God*
Acts vii. 57. *saying, Lord Jesus receive my Spirit.*

There are two answers given to the argument that arises out of this Scripture. *First*, that the word *God* is not in the original, but supplied by our translators; and their doing it has been insult-
See a discourse of Free-thinking. ed as a trick or a fraud. But the persons, who can be triumphant upon that observation, shew they are very ready for it; and I must tell 'em it is a little too soon for people to boast at the girding

on

on of the harneſs: *Sporting, and making a wide mouth, and drawing out the tongue,* are given as a mark to know the *children of tranſgreſſion, and the ſeed of falſhood.* That the word was thrown in by our tranſlators is plain enough; but apparently without any deſign to ſteal upon us the doctrine of Chriſt's Divinity; for this truth receives no advantage at all from that reading, but ſtands in fuller force, and in a better light without it. Becauſe it is evident, that *Stephen,* who *ſaw heaven open'd, and the glory of God, and Jeſus at the right hand of God,* found it was now his duty to commend a departing ſoul to one who could take care of it; and whoever this was, he call'd upon *Him.* His laſt prayer and *recumbence* was on him; for the word ſignifies both theſe. He has nothing farther to ſay about himſelf, than to beg that the Perſon he ſpoke to would *receive his ſpirit.*

SERM. XXXVI. Iſa. lvii. 4.

Now the queſtion is, whether his faith was at this time dealing with the ſame that *David*'s did? or whether the *Jewiſh* religion taught people to think that none but the Supreme God was fit to be their friend in a dying hour, but that Chriſtianity has made us dependent on one who is dependent himſelf? 'Tis but a ſorry compliment to the Goſpel, to ſuppoſe that it makes that to be the work of a creature, of which none but God is capable. They of old us'd to deal with the principal Agent, and are we to believe in a deputy? The accuſation had been true, that *Stephen* ſpake blaſphemous words *againſt Moſes and againſt God,* if he taught people ſuch a dependence upon Chriſt, as all good men us'd to have upon a faithful Creator. Strike the word *God* from this text, and read it thus, that *they ſton'd Stephen, calling upon, and ſaying, Lord Jeſus receive my ſpirit,* and does it not appear that the Perſon he call'd upon was *Jeſus,* and the petition that he made to him was that he would

receive

SERM. XXXVI. *receive his ſpirit?* the beſt thing that he could give; and the laſt reſignation that he could make.

This agrees to the promiſe that our Saviour left with his diſciples, *I will come again, and* RECEIVE YOU *to myſelf, that where I am, there ye may be alſo.* Can we think that he who ſaid this was any leſs than the benefactor upon whom the Pſalmiſt had his whole dependence? *Thou wilt guide me by thy counſel, and afterwards receive me to thy glory.* Are there two of theſe friends; and is one of 'em not a God? Thus he reveal'd himſelf to his people, and thus they receiv'd him: *The Lord God of the holy Prophets ſent his Angel to ſhew to his ſervants the things that muſt ſhortly be done.* And who is he? *I Jeſus have ſent my Angel to teſtifie to you. He that teſtifies theſe things ſays, Surely I come quickly.* We ſee of whom they underſtood it by their anſwer, *Amen, even ſo come Lord Jeſus.*

Joh. xiv. 3. Pſ. lxxiii. 24. Rev. xxii. 6. ver. 16. ver. 20.

When God ſpake at ſundry times, and in divers manners, by types, propheſies, viſions, voices, miracles, and ſigns, he ſtill led up the people thro' thoſe things to himſelf: The faith of men did not centre in the figure or the prophet, but in him that appointed them. And does he ſpeak in theſe laſt days *by his Son*, to drop his own name, that we ſhould have leſs concern with a God now, than they had formerly? and yet this is plainly the caſe, if Chriſt and the Father are not one. But that's a doctrine which he has proclaim'd; *If ye had known me, ye ſhould have known my Father; and henceforth ye know him, and have ſeen him. Believeſt thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me. The words that I ſpeak unto you, I ſpeak not of myſelf, but the Father that dwells in me does the works. Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, or elſe believe me for the very works ſake.*

Joh. xiv. 7, 10, 11

Moſes

Moſes was a faithful ſervant to the Moſt High: he never ſtood as a skreen between the people and their God, but ſtill directed 'em higher and further; and it's very unhappy that Chriſt was more furniſh'd than he, and that by his coming into the world, our faith has leſs to do with a God than theirs had; which it certainly muſt have, if we do not *ſee the light of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*. *David* had a great opinion of *Moſes*; but he durſt not ſay to him, *Into thy hands do I commit my ſpirit*. No, there are two reaſons for this ſurrender to God, that can never be applied to a creature. *Firſt*, that *he had redeem'd it*; and certainly *Stephen* meant no leſs, when he ſaid, *Lord Jeſus receive my ſpirit*, he look'd upon him to be *the holy One of Iſrael, and his Redeemer*. *Secondly*, *David* calls him *the God of truth*, which may either be underſtood of his nature, that he is the true God, in oppoſition to idols, or of his covenant, that this is *order'd in all things, and ſure*. SERM. XXXVI.

Now, both theſe reaſons are equally good in the petition of *Stephen*: In calling upon Jeſus, he had to do with him, who is full of grace and *truth*, the way, *the truth* and the life; *the Amen*, the faithful and *true* witneſs. He that is holy, and he that is *true*; that holy and *juſt* One, as he is call'd, and by whom grace and *truth came* to the world, who came to bear witneſs to the *truth*, and to whom it is ſaid in the praiſes of heaven, *Juſt and true are all thy ways, thou King of Saints*. Thus we are built on the foundation of the Apoſtles and prophets, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone. Joh. i. 14. xiv. 5. Rev. i. 5. xv. 3. Eph. ii. 20.

Secondly, Another anſwer to this expreſſion of the Martyr's faith, is what I have met with in a late book, where the author is very full of a profeſſion, that he is *Chriſtianus*, but not *Chriſticola*; a Chriſtian, but not a worſhiper of Chriſt. He

SERM. XXIV.

says, the case of *Stephen* was extraordinary, that he had such a vision as none can expect, and that therefore he is no more an example to us, than *Paul* was in his being caught up to the third heavens. This is a mighty thought indeed, and may be number'd rather among the *perverse* than the cunning *disputings* of men of corrupt minds, who are destitute of the truth.

That his discoveries were unusual I grant, but his sentence is no other than the last profession of every believer. They are all *looking to Jesus*, as the Finisher of their faith. What he said was either right or wrong: if it was right for him to put his soul into the hands of Jesus, I must tell you, 'tis impossible he should do any more to the great God, who has said so plainly, *My Son, give me thy heart*. If it was wrong, and stands not for your example, but your caution, I think the favour of God to his Martyrs has rather prov'd a snare than a benefit to the church. If the first man who ever suffer'd for the Christian religion made such an unhappy use of the testimony that was given him from above, as to bequeath *that* to a creature, which is the most noble present that can be made to a God, we must not say that the blood of the Martyrs is the seed, but rather the stain and the scandal, of the church.

Acts vii. 55. Joh. xvi. 13.

But when he said it, *he was full of the holy Ghost*, whose office it was not to delude, but to *guide 'em into all truth*. Now, here's the choice that is left us, either to condemn *Stephen* for an *idolater*, or this author for an *infidel*; either the one made a prostitute of his conscience, or the other has done it of his reason. And tho' I hope I shall ever admire charity as the glory of my religion, yet I must profess I have a greater esteem for that Martyr, than I have for such writers, who confess themselves to be out of the number of those that *in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*. Well,

1 Cor. i. 2.

Well, my brethren, this is like to be the case of every one of us in a little time. Die we must; and as long as nature and grace are capable of acting, we shall be putting ourselves into some hands or other. The Scripture has directed us by many a precept, as well as this noble example, thus to look unto Jesus; which is more than I shall dare to do, if I do not think him to be a God. "*Unto thee,* "*O Lord, do I lift up my soul.* Whenever my "soul us'd this language, I knew in whom I have "believ'd, and was persuaded that he is able to "keep what I have committed to him against that "day, I always understood it of Christ, 'Tis "to him the consignments have been made many a "time; and therefore, as soon as ever I come to "find that he is no God, my religion will be all "a draw-back, a fetching of things out of his "hand." Whatever value I may have for him, (as I owe a great deal to the Angels who are below him) "yet my faith and hope must be in a "God; and more especially in the last and "greatest concern that I can have.

SERM. XXXVI. Ps. XXV. 1.

I cannot dismiss this head, tho' I have been a long while upon it, without telling you a story that has some relation to it. A very good friend and most intimate acquaintance told me several years ago what scruples he had about the Divinity of Christ. I could not but observe in the frequent conversation I had with him, that he was far from the length that some have arriv'd at, to have no pleasure in the truth, but a pleasure in unrighteousness. I could see the objections gave him a great deal of pain, and he strove to reconcile the *Arian* and *Socinian* doctrine with what is opposite to 'em. I remember I once plied him with this particular instance of the Martyr *Stephen*, and told him how dreadful it would be in a dying hour for a man not to know where to look, or upon whom to have a

SERM. XXXVI. dependence as the laſt friend of his ſoul: and that if the Scripture directs my faith only to *Jeſus*, and reaſon tells me he is not God, I ſhall take believing in that caſe to be a diſconſolate venture. I deſir'd him not to ſtrive againſt inward evidence, or treat the myſteries of religion as if he was ſure they were either a falſhood, or the craft of deſigning men. And I the rather did this, becauſe he had been for ſome time in a languiſhing ſtate of health. After theſe things, he more than once told me, how earneſtly he had deſir'd, that God would not let him go out of the world uncertain about that matter. And tho' he had continu'd long ill, yet his death was ſo far ſudden, that a few moments before, he declar'd himſelf ſomething better than he had been for ſeveral weeks, and ſo had juſt time and ſtrength enough to ſay no more than theſe words, *Lord Jeſus receive my ſpirit.* Thus have I gone thro' both the explication of the text, and the argument that it gives us, that He who is believ'd on in the world, is no other than the moſt high God. I am now to take this doctrine in another view

III. As it is a MYSTERY. Indeed we have liv'd to ſee and hear this very name treated as if it was only a jeſt; and that by myſtery you're to underſtand either a contradiction or an impoſture. Thus are *high thoughts exalting themſelves againſt the knowledge of the Son of God.* I am ſure in uſing the phraſe we do not depart from the *words* of Scripture. There we often have it; and certainly the holy Spirit did not ſcatter it about in *his* book, to have it banter'd and expos'd in *ours.* Such profaneneſs will end in univerſal trembling: it makes thoſe tremble now who are ſerious; and it will do the ſame in thoſe that are not ſo: *Therefore be not mockers, leſt your bands be made ſtrong.* For my part, I ſhall conſider it in the way that my text has preſented it. And you will find that believing on

1 Cor. x. 5.

Iſa. xxviii. 22.

Chriſt

Chriſt in the world is a myſtery, if you do but attend to theſe two things. SERM. XXXVI.

1. The nature of the work.

2. The nature of the place: that there ſhould be any *believing* at all, and that it ſhould be *in the world.*

1. *Believing* itſelf is a myſtery; as it is acting without the direction of ſenſe and reaſon, and very often againſt 'em; and therefore in oppoſition to the example and practice of others. So that, it muſt proceed from ſomething that we feel only in ourſelves.

(1.) Believing is acting without the direction of ſenſe and reaſon: 'tis *depending* upon what we do not ſee, and *admiring* what we cannot underſtand: *That which is born of the fleſh is fleſh, and that which is born of the ſpirit is ſpirit.* We look at *the things that are not ſeen which are eternal. Whom having not ſeen, ye love; and in whom, tho' now ye ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with a joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.* And is not this wonderful to thoſe whoſe ſouls get no farther than their bodies, who *mind earthly things?* Their great enquiry is, who will *ſhew* us any good? They walk in the *ſight of their eyes*; their portion, buſineſs, and hearts are in this life; they know nothing what believing is. And perſons who are thus diſtinguiſh'd from 'em make an unaccountable figure in their opinion: *The Lord of hoſts*, whom believers *ſanctifie in their hearts, is for a ſtone of ſtumbling, and rock of offence*; and both *he and the children whom God has given him are for ſigns, and for wonders in Iſrael.*

Joh. iii. 3. 2 Cor. iv. 18. 1 Pet. i. 6. Phil. iii. 18. Eccleſ. xi. 9. Joh. viii. 13, 14, ver. 18.

(2.) Believing is oftentimes acting *againſt* theſe two principles, by which we are to be conducted in other things. We are call'd to believe what reaſon cannot explain, and to perform what ſenſe will abhor: *By honour and diſhonour, by evil report and good report; as dying, chaſten'd, ſorrowful, poor, and having*

2 Cor. vi. 7.

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having nothing. I know that this very description of faith makes it the contempt of the world; but it's never the worse for that, a minister is to be *patient to all men*; but it's carrying the complaisance a great deal too far, if they who are enemies to the Gospel of Christ can persuade him either to give it up, or to keep it in. The Apostle beg'd that

Eph. vi. 19, 20 *utterance might be given him, that he might open his mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which he was an ambassador in bonds, that therein he might speak boldly as he ought to speak.*

I look upon human reason to be no more a judge of doctrine than it is of practice. It is employ'd indeed about the rule, it receives the evidence upon which I believe. This is revelation; but it has nothing to do to determine about the matters

1 Cor. xi. 12. ver. 14. reveal'd: *We have receiv'd, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God. The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

I'll give you an instance of this in duty. *Abraham*'s reason told him, that the command to offer his son *Isaac* came from God; that it was truly the Lord who tempted him, and said those cutting things that led him into an unheard of practice; but he never enquir'd of reason whether he should obey or no. He never measur'd this command by the law of nature, which oblig'd him to shed no blood, and to take care of his child; or even by the promise of the covenant, that *in Isaac shall thy*

Gen. xxii. 3. *seed be called.* I'm sure that precept, *Go take thy son, thy only son Isaac whom thou lovest, and offer him for a burnt-offering*, is as unintelligible, and liable to

1 Joh. v. 7. as many objections as that text can be: *There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Ghost, and these three are one.* Our reason

son may with equal justice call this nonsense, and endeavour to prove it spurious, and go about hunting into copies with as much speed as a wild ass runs in the wilderness; for indeed both these works are but *snuffing up the wind at pleasure.* SERM. XXXVI.

Let not any say, God cannot be suppos'd to tell me, that *three are one* by revelation, because he has before-hand told me, that three cannot be one in nature; and I must not imagine that he gives me a new light to contradict the old one. *Abraham*'s love to his son, and his abstaining from shedding innocent blood, was as much rooted in nature, and establish'd by all the principles of religion, as that one cannot be three. He was as sure of those practical maxims, as we are of this mysterious notion. Had all the Angels in heaven given him that command about *Isaac*, and sent him to *Moriah* upon so dreadful an errand, you may be sure he would have stuck by the principles that God had implanted already, of justice to human nature, and affection to his child, and especially a regard to the promise: *In Isaac shall thy seed be call'd*, and not a hair of his head must have perish'd.

No more should we ever say that *three are one*, or that *the just dies for the unjust*, or that *the body shall rise incorruptible*, or that *a Virgin shall conceive and bring forth a Son*, or that *God could be manifest in the flesh*; these things cannot be explain'd by reason: they are *spiritually discerned*, and therefore not to be *receiv'd* but upon report; and upon no report but that of a God, who cannot lye. 1 Pet. iii. 15. 1 Cor. xv. 52. Isa. vii. 14. 1 Cor. ii. 14.

If he has said 'em they must be, tho' we are at a loss to conceive how they can be. So it was with *Abraham*: he had no more to do than to enquire whether this command came from God or no; and when that difficulty is over, his reason is under a bar. The objections that would have prevail'd, had the exhortation been given by a creature, are

SERM. XXXVI. not allow'd to ſtir, or move a tongue. He knew the promiſe would hold, he knew the command muſt be anſwer'd, he knew the one was deſtructive of the other; but he leaves that to God. His faith was to ask no queſtions, but to believe the good old way, *in hope and againſt hope*, becauſe it depend-

Rom. iv. 17. ed upon *him who raiſes the dead, and calls the things that are not, as tho' they were.*

Now, we go no greater lengths in receiving a doctrine that we cannot underſtand, than in doing a duty that we cannot account for. Don't ſay that God will not put you upon *believing* againſt reaſon; you ſee he may put you upon *acting* againſt it. What principle of nature is more early, more internal and perpetual with us, than that of ſelf-preſervation? and therefore what can be more abominable than a religion that deſtroys it? and yet it is notorious that this is the great demand of Chriſtianity: *If any man*, ſaith our Lord, *hate not his own life, he cannot be my diſciple.* It's obſerv'd of

Rev. xii. 11. ſome of his people, that they *lov'd not their lives unto the death.* He has hung a dreadful puniſhment over the contrary diſpoſition, *He that ſaves his life ſhall loſe it.* 'Tis as reaſonable to embrace a myſtery as a martyrdom; they are both unaccountable. Human reaſon is laid aſide, or plainly overrul'd in

Iſa. lv. 8. each of 'em, and ſhews that *God's ways are not our ways*, nor his thoughts our thoughts. Therefore,

(3.) Believing is acting in oppoſition to the practice and example of others; and it's no eaſie matter to get thus high. Nay, perhaps your diſcouragement will ariſe from men of great names, from

Iſa. xlviii. 3. particular friends, from ſuch as *call themſelves of the holy city.* Your faith will be loaded with all the ſcandalous inſinuations of enthuſiaſm, perſecution, conceit, and folly. Arguments againſt you will be ſaid to riſe from a zeal for liberty, the honour of the Chriſtian religion, and a proſpect of making it go down with infidels. Some

Some profeſs to believe the doctrine of the Gof- SERM.
pel, and take a Chriſtian name only as they took XXXVI.
a civil one, becauſe they found it where they were born; theſe will not endure the trial. In a day of temptation mere forms of ſpeaking are what they may be driven from; and if they make a Creed, which is but the *language* of faith, to be the *ground* of it, it will never do. Theſe, rather than be the jeſt of an adverſary, will be their captives, and prove treacherous to the cauſe which they cannot maintain; and when they leave you, it will be with the deſtruction of all modeſty, humility, and tenderneſs. Tho' they cannot lift up their heads, they will lift up their *heels* againſt you.

Now, is it not a wonder, when the roads are ſo lin'd and guarded, that there is any believing in the world? and yet *faith is of the operation of God*; as men do not plant it, ſo men ſhall not root it up. Chriſt has always rais'd up ſome who have a concern for thoſe doctrines which the world reckon a trifle, and many profeſſors have dropt as an error. There is a principle that carries us thro' all the ſnares of friendſhip, and all the terrors of ſhame; that makes us know *the friendſhip of the world to be* Jam. iv. 6.
enmity with God, and ſets things out to our choice in this fair diſtinction, that *the friend of the world is the enemy of God.*

(4.) This proceeds from ſomething within our ſelves. We have ſeveral arguments for a doctrine that may be pleaded with others; as a clear revelation, the comparing ſpiritual things with ſpiritual, the known ſenſe of words, the frequent teſtimony of Scripture; and ſome of a lower nature, the concurrence of God's people in all ages; I do not only mean thoſe who were witneſſes in a *council,* but thoſe who were ſo at a *ſtake.* Theſe, I ſay, are conſiderations that will have their weight with ſuch as are ſeeking after the truth.

But

SERM. XXXVI. But the principle of believing is incommunicable, and cannot be convey'd in an argument. *No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.* *Peter* and the rest of the Apostles had much evidence of our Lord's being the Son of God from his doctrine, his miracles, and his conformity to all the prophetical characters; and yet flesh and blood did not reveal this to them but *our Father who is in heaven.* *Saul* had heard great reasonings for the Christian Religion at the trial and the death of *Stephen*; but that faith and love which he found at last came along with *the exceeding abundant grace of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

1 Cor. xii. 3.

1 Tim. i. 11.

Sept. 27. 1719.

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2. TO what is said of believing in general we may add the circumstance of *place where* men are to look for it, which leads us farther into the mystery. 'Tis a wonder there should be any such principle as faith, but it is more so that Christ is believ'd on IN THE WORLD. In this world and not in heaven; in a world where he had been refus'd; where the greatest evidence had prov'd in vain; where he was no longer to appear; where people were possest with prejudice against him; under the power of his most obstinate enemy, and where nothing was to be got by it.

1. You

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(1.) You will observe the mystery of believing in Christ, if you regard it as a thing to be met with *in this world* and not in heaven. Had it been said of him now, that he is receiv'd up with glory, that the vast multitudes who hear his voice admire his person, we could easily come into the report, because there he is reveal'd with a brightness unconfin'd: There's no veil upon his face, no limitation to their eyes. *Now we see thro' a glass darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but then we shall know even as our selves are known.* And this is so much above all our experience here, that he is supposed to be in a sort of obscurity till that time comes. *That's the revelation of Jesus Christ. He who is our life shall appear.* He is now our life, we have a life that's hid with Christ in God, but in all the present manifestations of him there is the *hiding of his power.*

1 Cor. xiii. 12.

1 Pet. i. 5. Col. iii. 4.

His appearing is always spoke of as a thing that's future, and belongs to the felicities of another state. 'Tis said of them that are before the throne of God, that *they see his face, and his name is in their foreheads.* The will of Christ was, that his people should be *with him where they are to behold his glory.* There the disguise is off both from him and them, and no wonder that in broad day-light they should *see the King in his beauty*, because they are got into the land which to us is *afar off.* There's no danger that any of those above should be offended in him. The Angels that proclaim his perfections, and the Saints that live upon his merit, have not one unbeliever to say any thing against them, but the whole assembly and church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven *ascribe honour, and glory, and salvation, and power to him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever.* They are got up to the *fountain of life*, to the spring-head where life runs clean, and full, and eternal; and so

Rev. xxii. 3.

Joh. xvii. 24.

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so *in his light they see light.* They see him as he is. He appears to them as he appears to himself in the brightness of his person, and the express declaration of his glory. *They are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sits upon the throne dwells among them.*

Ps. xxxvi. 10.

Rev. vii. 15.

But the mystery is, that he is believ'd on in a world where all this is hid; that he has a people, *who having not seen him, do love him, and tho' now they see him not, believing in him, do rejoice with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.* This is more than *Thomas* would do. He insisted upon external evidence as the condition and guide of his faith, *Except I see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe*; and perhaps this is what he was led into by the account that the other disciples gave of an interview in his absence, that he *shew'd 'em his hands and his side.* All this advantage they have in heaven, for *he is in the midst of the throne as a Lamb that has been slain. He is cloth'd with a vesture dipt in blood.* Our Saviour who pitied their frame condescended to one who was so weak in the faith, and therefore saith to *Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing.* But he closes the conversation with that remark, *Thomas, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed, but blessed are they that have not seen and yet believe.*

1 Pet. i. 6.

Joh. xx. 25.

Rev. v. 6.

xix. 13.

Now what is it for them to believe? What is that act of the soul which goes by this title? You will be able to answer the question by comparing the two parts of this glory. *These things are written, that ye might believe, that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life in his name.* I take the faith that is here describ'd to be of the same nature and extent with that

ver. ult.

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that which *Thomas* had before profeſs'd in thoſe words, *My Lord and my God.* Believing him to be the Chriſt the Son of God, and believing that you may have life in his name is believing him to be *your Lord and your God.* As your Lord he is the Chriſt, and as your God he is the author of that life that you're to have in his name. Don't put it, as ſome people ſtrive to do, upon the confuſion that *Thomas* was in, and that the words ſignify not his ſentiments but his ſurprize; for ſuch exclamations and profane interjections are what the Scripture would teach us rather to abhor than to imitate. This was the language of a believer, and not of an affrighted man, and it's in vain to divert the force of the argument by another interpretation, *viz.* that *Thomas* declar'd *Chriſt* to be his Lord, and the *Father* to be his God. This is againſt all the laws of reading, 'tis making any thing of every thing, and at that rate there's not a ſentence in the Bible that comes within a determinate meaning. 'Tis plain our Saviour calls this the language of *Thomas*'s faith, and of a faith *in him:* He had been *faithleſs* before, not in the Father, for that was not the queſtion, but in the reality of Chriſt's reſurrection; and what he calls believing, was the root of that good profeſſion, *My Lord and my God.*

And ſuch a faith was to obtain thro' the preaching of the Goſpel among thoſe that had never ſeen what *Thomas* did. For it's remarkable, that his faith went beyond the evidence. All that he could ſee in his fingers and his ſide, prov'd no more than that he was that very man who had ſuffer'd upon the Croſs, and that the ſame body was riſen indeed, that had been crucify'd and ſlain. But when he is ſure of that, he ſpeaks of him not meerly as one dead and alive again, but as the ſame that he always took him for, *His Lord and his God.* The

SERM. XXXVII. wounds in his side, the prints of nails and spears are no marks of a God; it had been blasphemy to give him the title upon that account; these prov'd no more than a human nature, but you see the
Rom. x. 9. office of a true faith; *If thou believest that Jesus died, and that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* This is not to be struck off from a regard to his Deity, for *Thomas*, who question'd his resurrection, is no sooner convinc'd of *that*, but he declares his opinion of the *other*, that he was his
Rev. xi. 15. Lord and his God. Thus the *kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his*
Ps. xxiv. 1. *Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever. The earth is* this *Lord's, and the fulness thereof.*

(2.) 'Tis mysterious that he is believ'd on in a world where he had been refus'd. When *the Son of man came, he found* little or *no faith in the earth.*
Joh. i. 10, 11. *He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came to his own, and his own received him not.* This was needful on several accounts, and an honour to God's justice, that the *Jews* who had kill'd the prophets and ston'd those who were sent unto 'em should fill up the measure of their iniquity; upon this account *their house was left unto 'em desolate.* Nor is this proceeding void of a regard to his mercy, for *by their*
Rom. xi. 11. *fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles; the middle wall of partition* which had continued so long be-
Eph. ii. 11. tween the one and the other was to be *broke down* at his death, as the veil of the temple was at that time rent asunder. And indeed the project of God's wisdom, the design of his mercy to mankind in general, made it needful that a Saviour
1 Cor. ii. 7. should not be known; *For had the princes of this world known him, they would not have crucify'd the Lord of glory*; and without the shedding of his blood there could be no remission. The Apostle gave that soft account of it to the *Jews*, *I wot*

that

that through ignorance ye did it, and so did your rulers, but those things which God before had shewn by the mouth of all his prophets that Christ should suffer, he has so fulfilled. We might from a flood of Scripture arguments prove, that Christ *must needs have suffered and enter into his glory.* But

SERM. XXXVII. Acts iii. 17. Luk. xxiv. 46.

I am now to consider the wonder that arises out of the case, that after such an usage he should ever have a people to receive him. How strangely are the parts of the xxiith *Psalm* put together! at the beginning he complains of God's *forsaking him,* and being so *far from the words of his roaring*; that his enemies had acted like *greedy dogs,* given him *vinegar to drink, and gap'd upon him with their mouths as a ravening and a roaring lion,* which describes with a great deal of propriety the very manner of his sufferings so many ages after; and yet when all this is over, *the kingdom shall be the Lord's*; this Lord's who before was *a worm and no man*; nothing after that is said of him, but what shews him to be a God. He is to be *the Governor among the nations,* not merely by the force and ways of providence, but *a seed shall serve him, and be accounted to the Lord for a generation; they shall arise and declare his righteousness to a people that shall be born, that the Lord has done this,* i. e. his name and the righteousness that he has brought in, shall be handed down through all ages. As they that are *gone down to the dust* have hop'd for his truth, so they who are not yet come out of the womb shall be instructed to do the same. His glory is to run parallel with time. He'll have a church as long as he has a world.

Psal. xxii. 1, 2,

Who could have expected this after he was *despised and rejected of men?* We usually say at the blasting of a new project, that it is nipt in the bud, the very blossom goes up as dust. To speak in the language that God himself has taught us, he

SERM. XXXVII. he had made several experiments and all in vain. He is compar'd to a King, who sent out many servants to his subjects, some they ston'd, others they kill'd, and all of them they refus'd; he has but one way more, I will send them, saith he, my well-beloved Son, *When they see him, they will reverence him.* He speaks there after the manner of men, all the reason in the world would give it that they should do so; but instead of that they cry out, *This is the heir, come let us kill him.*

Now after such a treatment might he not have said, as I can send no *better* than my Son, I will send no *more?* And yet in that world where he was so little known, that they despis'd him, they hated him, they kill'd him, there is he to be admired, *Kings shall fall down before him, and all nations shall serve him*; *he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba*, tho' he died so poor and necessitous; *Prayer shall be made for him continually, and daily shall he be praised*; *his name shall endure for ever, his name shall continue as long as the sun, men shall be blessed in him, and all nations shall call him blessed.* He who was *a servant of rulers, whom men despis'd and abhorred, was to sprinkle many nations.* His doctrine would not conquer like thunder, but like rain. *Kings were to shut their mouths at him:* He that had been the reproach of men was to become *the desire of all nations*; and he that pour'd out his soul unto death was to have *a portion with the great, and divide the spoil with the strong.*

Psal. lxxii. 11, 13, 17. Isa. xlix. 8. lii. ult. liii. ult.

Little did the *Jews* imagine that their hour was his hour, *when the Son of man should be glorify'd*; and that the power of darkness should prove *the womb of the morning.* They did not understand, and could not believe the propriety of that comparison, that his interest would be like *a grain of wheat thrown into the ground.* Whilst it was entire, it abode alone, but by dying it was to be multiplied.

Joh. xvi. 30. Psal. cx. 3.

plied. This the Apostle tells them, *It was needful that the word of God should be first preach'd unto you; but seeing ye have put it far from you, and judg'd your selves unworthy of everlasting life, lo we turn to the Gentiles.* And he speaks with assurance upon another occasion, *The salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it.* Agreeable to which, a prophetic rapture is put into the mouth of Christ, *Thus saith the Lord that form'd me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength. And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, and thou shalt be my salvation to the ends of the earth.*

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Isa. xlix. 5, 6.

(3.) To this you may add another consideration, which heightens the wonder, that he is believed on in a world where the greatest evidence has already prov'd in vain. *What he has seen and heard he testified, and no man received his testimony.* If we are to judge of things by the gross reasoning of mankind, the *Jews* had a thousand times more to make 'em Christians than we have. Our Lord was among them blameless, by their own confession, *A Lamb without blemish, and without spot;* whereas the Gospel is preach'd to you by sinners; we have this *treasure in earthen vessels*, made of clay and ting'd with guilt; and yet our ministry succeeds more than his, in accomplishment of that promise, *He that believes on me, shall do the things that I do, yea greater things than I do shall he do, because I go to my Father.*

Joh. iii. 32.

Joh. xiv. 12.

Again, he spake as never man did; his enemies *wonder'd at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth;* as no guile, so no error ever came from his lips: but your conversion is by the means of

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such as are but of yesterday, and know nothing: They who *know but in part*, must *prophesy in part*.

1 Cor. xiii. 9.

And chiefly you may observe the miracles that he wrought were in a way that never any person ought to pretend to, I mean at his own pleasure. He had it always in his power to ruffle nature and surprize the world, and he still did it in a testimony to himself, which was going higher than ever *Moses* did or any creature ought to do. *Moses* told them, he would give them a *sign that the Lord had sent him*; but the works that Christ refers to, are a proof that *he is in the Father, and the Father in him*. They were arguments to prove more than a divine commission; he pleads from them such an union, as it would have been prophane for him to speak of if he was not God.

Joh. xiv. 22.

How much of this evidence was thrown away? As he saith, *I have done among them such works as no other man did, yet they have hated both me and my Father*. Now, could it ever be expected, that things should mend when miracles ceas'd? Was it not in vain to hope that an effusion of the Spirit would convince those whom the resurrection of *Lazarus* had left impenitent? I do not look upon this wonder to be greater than the other; but as an argument of that power that our Saviour had above, he sent the Spirit upon his Apostles for an evidence, and the Spirit upon his enemies for a conviction. *We are witnesses to these things, and so also is the holy Ghost, whom God has given to them that obey him.*

xv. 24.

Act. v. 32.

Tho' there were so few in his own nation that had any regard to him, and they had lately in an outrage wish'd his blood upon themselves and their children, yet we read of three thousand converted at one sermon; to let us see that the success of the Gospel does not arise from a virtue in the

person who delivers it, but from the blessing which God is pleas'd to convey by it. The *Jews saw no form or comeliness in him, that they should desire him. He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, they hid their faces from him;* and yet he was *fairer than the sons of men, his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the Cedars.* Isa liii. 2, 3. Ps. xlv. 2. Cant. v 15.

(4.) He is thus believ'd on in a world where he appears no longer. If he had so little influence when he was here, what can be expected from the distance of heaven? Now that we are to know him no more after the flesh, God has clos'd our hopes of an intercourse with him in his glorified state. The stories that the Papists tell upon this head deserve to be laught at as ridiculous, and abhorr'd as prophane; and yet, though he is no more with us in person, I mean in his body, we find the truth of that promise, *I will be always with you to the end of the world. Amen.* Matth. xxviii. 20.

They that deny his deity have also the rancour to slander his love; and as they had rather be without a happiness than allow him to give it, they take pains to empty these words of the kind assurance they are so full of, and tell us, that the promise signifies no more than a presence with his disciples as long as they liv'd; that the end of the world was the end of that age. But what?— Does the possession *of all power in heaven and earth* with which he introduc'd this promise reach no further than the lives of these Apostles? Was the duty of *discipling all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and teaching them to observe all things that he had commanded,* limited to them in person? Was the Gospel no more than so much apostolical breath, that went forth when they returned to their dust? Yes surely, *They were* 2 Cor. x. 10 15, 16.

SERM. XXXVII. *to be enlarged according to their rule abundantly; to preach the Gospel in the most distant regions.*

And if he was present with *them,* is he not capable of being so with *us?* The argument why he is not present with *us,* is, that he is now in heaven: so he was a long while after he parted with *them.*

1 Pet. v. 1. They were *witnesses of the sufferings of Christ, and partakers of the glory that should be reveal'd.* They serv'd him many years; and if being in heaven destroyed his presence with a people on earth, the words of Christ must not be understood of the end of the Apostles lives, but the end of his own: and so here's a promise for the present time, I am *always* with you, that is, I am so *now,* and the word *always* must comprehend no more than a few days. These men of *Galilee* saw him go up to heaven, *A cloud received him out of their sight;* and yet after that, they knew he would be with

Heb. xiii. 9. them, and found it so upon all occasions, for *Jesus is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever.*

(5.) He is thus believed on in a world possess'd of the greatest prejudice against him. Both the things and the persons in it are his enemies; it all

Joh. xiv. 18. lies under a curse. *If the world,* saith he, *hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.* As for the men of the world who have their portion in this life, they have no bible-character but that of

Psal. xvii. 14. *God's sword.* They hate those who are chosen out from among them; and as they do not believe themselves, they rise with a perpetual anger against them that do. The Apostle desires to be *delivered from*

2 Thes. iii. 2. *wicked and unreasonable Men,* and gives this as the ground of it, *that all men have not faith.* You may conclude from his way of arguing, that tho' the men who have not faith pretend to the greatest moderation and to the brightest reason, yet really they are cruel and absurd, and such as the people of God had need pray to be delivered from. With

what

what affection does he recommend himself to them upon this head? *Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea.* SERM. XXXVII. Rom. xv. 30, 31.

He that looks into a world that's unseen, and depends upon a world that's future, has much such a life as *Noah* had, by which he became an *heir of the righteousness that is by faith, and condemned the world.* They laugh'd at his preparing the ark, he was in vain *a preacher of righteousness* among them; and the dispute between them held till the flood came and decided it. Nay, as *Enoch* walk'd with God by faith, he was the jest of those whom he liv'd amongst; and therefore from him we have a prophecy concerning Christ and the vengeance he will take on unbelievers at the last day. 'Tis above five thousand years since he foretold the scornful usage that ministers of the Gospel should have; for *he propheſied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his Saints to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them,* i. e. in their communions, *of their ungodly deeds which they have committed, and of the hard speeches which they have spoken against him.* Heb. xi. 5. Jude 14, 15.

Now when there is such a run against reveal'd religion, it must be the mighty power of God that makes a Christian resolv'd not to be laught or threatned out of it. Here's *a stone disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, and to them that believe, he is precious*; tho' others *stumble at the word being disobedient.* That's no right faith that does not conquer reputation and over-rule what may be said for it. *How can ye believe,* saith Christ, *who receive honour from one another, and neglect the honour that comes from God only?* 'Tis too often that popularity steps in between us and our duty; hence 1 Pet. ii. 4, 7, 8. Joh. v. 44.

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we are told, that thou must not only *believe in thine heart the Lord Jesus*, but *confess* WITH THY MOUTH *that God rais'd him from the dead.* 'Twas here that the argument stuck with many of the *Jews* and *Pharisees*, of whom we are told, that *they believ'd in him, but did not* CONFESS *him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue, for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.* The faith of *Moses* was just the reverse to what is said of these men; that *he esteemed the reproach of Christ*, that is, the reproach that he endured for him *to be greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect to the recompence of reward.* He that is for present pay, and cannot trust a promise, is not fit to deal with our God in his covenant.

Rom. x. 8.

Joh. xii. 43.

Heb. xi. 26.

Nay, the THINGS of this world are enemies to our faith; *riches enter in and choak the word*; and therefore they that are rich in this world are charged with a particular caution, *not to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God:* as if their trust could not be in both; if it is in riches, it is not in the living God. The faith that's right gives us a victory over the present world; we shall *sell as though we sold not, and buy as though we possessed not, and use these things as not abusing them.* And is not this a mystery that there should be such a person as a believer upon earth? One, who *though he walks in the flesh, does not war after the flesh?* whose body is upon earth, and his *conversation in heaven?* because his heart is upon things above, *where Jesus sits at the right hand of God. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; for greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world: They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God; he that knows God, hears us; he that knows not God, hears not us: Hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.*

1 Tim. vi. 20.

1 Cor. vii. 30.

2 Cor. x. 4.

Phil. iii. 20.

Col. iii. 1, 2.

1 Joh. iv. 4, 5, 6.

6. 'Tis

(6.) 'Tis farther ſtrange that he is believed on in a world that is under the power of his moſt obſtinate enemy. The influence of the evil ſpirit is declared in the very pride that denies it. There are no greater examples of this truth than among thoſe who have it in contempt. He is *the prince of the power of the air, the ſpirit that now works in the children of diſobedience.* From the fulneſs of his command, and the efficacy of his temptations, he is call'd *the god of this world*; as ſuch, he *blinds the eyes of them that believe not, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt who is the image of God ſhould ſhine into their hearts.* He himſelf *believes and trembles*, and if ſinners believ'd, they would tremble too; therefore on purpoſe to hinder *a godly ſorrow that works repentance*, he keeps them as ſtupid as he can. SERM. XXXVII. Eph. ii. 3. 2 Cor. iv. 4. Jam. ii. 18, 19.

Nor can I account for the oppoſition that's made to the Goſpel any other way. Where's the temptation for men to be angry that their Saviour is their God, that his death is their atonement, that his grace is their fund, and his righteouſneſs their plea? If theſe are errors, they are very delightful ones. I'm ſure they lay things out for our hope, and yet men are enrag'd that their Redeemer is ſo great, their happineſs ſo good, and the covenant ſo certain. What can this be owing to, but as the Apoſtle ſaith, that they are *ſet on fire of hell?* When a man ſtrives to believe againſt himſelf, takes pains not to be ſettled on his lees, but to be unſettled, and not to know what he ſhall truſt to, 'tis an unnatural way of ſinning. Well might our Saviour ſay, *He that ſins againſt me, wrongs his own ſoul; all they that hate me love death.* Now believing gives us a victory over him who leads ſo many thouſands captive at his pleaſure. He loſeth a ſoul, when that ſoul gets a right faith: there's one of the ſtrongeſt creatures baffled, and one of the craftieſt out-witted. Jam. iii. 3. Prov. viii. 36.

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(7) 'Tis strange that people should believe on Christ in a world when nothing is to be got by it. I do not affirm this in the strict sense of the words, for you know *godliness has the promise of all things*; but my meaning is, that the soul in the recumbence of his faith upon Christ Jesus, looks above all riches, honours, and every endearment of life. A life that is carried on by faith in the Son of God, is a life that's *hidden*, obscur'd and reserved. 'Tis not looking at things that are seen, but *at those that are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal.* And how great must that principle be, that foils the senses in their own kingdom? That takes off the soul from 'em when they have all their arguments about 'em? *We that are in this tabernacle shall groan, being burden'd; not for that we would be unclothed, but that mortality might be swallowed up of life.*

1 Tim. iv. 18.

2 Cor. iv. 18.

2 Cor. v. 4.

Oct. 11. 1719.

SERMON XXXVIII.

IV. I Am now to shew, that for the world to believe in Christ Jesus as GOD who was manifest in the flesh is a means of promoting that religion that ever was and ever will be the ornament of any profession. It is a mystery of GODLINESS. There's no necessity of opposing revelation to duty, as if they who preach'd up one were careless about the other. They are join'd together.

together, *Your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth.* We have no dry speculations, nor any doctrine which is not *according to godliness.* The believer has not received and admired a sett of unmoving Opinions, but the grace of God that brings salvation has taught him to *deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.* You're to *adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things,* by filling up every relation.

2 Thes. i. 3.

Tit. ii. 14.

Nor are there any better examples of those works that are *good and profitable to men,* than among them that *believe in Christ Jesus. Ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the holy Ghost: So that ye were examples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia; for from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad.*

1 Thes. i. 6, 7, 8.

This will appear if you do but consider with impartial thoughts, what the great business of religion is, and to what purposes it is both recommended as a practice and promis'd as a blessing. I take it to consist in these four things, 1*st*, a *subjection* to Christ's authority and a *conformity* to his image; this may be called inward religion, and thus I shall consider it in the principle. 2*dly*, There arises from this a duty both to God and man, which is commanded in the two tables of the moral law. 3*dly*, 'Tis a branch of this religion to make a *profession* of Christ, to own him in the world, and shew forth his praises. 4*thly*, The *joys* and satisfaction that Christ gives to his people who thus wait upon him may come into the general notion that we have of *godliness.* Now all these are begun, advanc'd and extended by the belief of those mysteries that we meet with in the faith, and in particular

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particular that he is a GOD who was *manifest in the flesh.*

1. You will see how the doctrine of incarnation is a mystery of godliness, if you do but consider that it's thus we come by our principle of subjection to Christ's authority and conformity to his image. He has made us for his *service*, and believing in him is obeying him. He has also made us for his *delight*, and thus believing in him is growing like unto him. We have both these notions of holiness convey'd to us in Scripture. He is equally the Sovereign and the Original of every good man. *Whom God foreknew, them did he predestinate to be conform'd to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.* Now each of these supposes your receiving him *as* GOD; for without this there is no duty to his empire, and there can be no resemblance of his purity.

Rom. viii. 29.

(1.) 'Tis as he is *God* that we believe in him to all the purposes of subjection and duty. The Gospel is *made known for the obedience of faith;* the obedience that flows from faith as a consequence, and is included in it as a property; for the very act of believing is a homage to his sovereignty, who gave us the revelation. 'Tis our allegiance to his truth, that we depend upon his word, and surrender every thought that would make an opposition to his command and pardon. That we are to have this regard of him in our approaches to him is plain, owning him as *Lord of all;* and therefore *the weapons of our warfare that are mighty through God*, through his appointment and his blessing, are *to pull down strong holds* to this purpose. *In casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought in obedience to Christ.*

Rom. vi. 25.

2 Cor. x 5.

Here you may observe a divine appointment of the ministry, we do *not war after the flesh.* Here's also

also that which renders it effectual, it is *mighty thro' God.* And can we suppose that all this while God is working for a creature? That he sends out his great power in the preaching of the Gospel, to advance any less than himself? No, 'tis not to be imagin'd, and therefore those *high things* that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God must be brought into captivity to the obedience of *Christ.* The knowledge of *God* and the obedience of *Christ* are the same thing; 'tis but one opposition that is offer'd to 'em both, and the moment that a person is cur'd of his ignorance and pride, he comes into a state of duty; so that you see an obedience to *Christ* is the great end of our ministry, the thing for which we preach and which is carried on with a divine blessing.

And again, he that is the efficient is also the final cause of our salvation. As *of him,* and *thro' him,* so *to him* are all things. But if Christ is not God, we may say here's an almighty power inspiring the word, merely for the sake of a creature. And what an unaccountable imagination must it give us, to think that God alone is the great end of every other work, all things are done that he may be glorified, but that Christ is to be the principal gainer in the chief design? If the graces of the holy Spirit are given to fill you with a reverence to the Mediator, to make him the object of your fear, and love, and hope, and to throw you into a state of communion with him, you must either conclude that he is God, or that religion makes you exceed in your apprehensions of him. *He is thy Lord,* saith *David, to the Church, and worship thou him*; and as the sceptre of his kingdom is a right sceptre, he is the God whose *throne is for ever and ever.*

Rom. xi. 36.

Psal. xlv. 12.

(2.) 'Tis only from a sense of his deity that our believing in him can give us a conformity to him.

Good

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Good men have no other author than God, unless you will suppose that the new life is not so well made as the old one, and that grace is of a lower original than nature. At first God made man in his own image and after his own likeness; and when he is created anew in Christ Jesus, is it after one who is not divine? Shall the better life be after the model of a creature, whilst the lower and the worse is taken from the Deity itself? for

Col. iii. 10. *the new man is renew'd in knowledge after the image of him that created him.*

Consider this transform upon the believers both ways, either in its principle, as it is infus'd and implanted in him, or in its progress, as it's carried on by acts of faith; the author of the former, and the object of the latter, can be no other than God. Now, we are said to be made holy by Christ Jesus in each of these respects. You find 'em in

Heb. ii. 11. one verse, *Both he that sanctifies, and they that are sanctified, are both of one, and therefore he is not asham'd to call 'em brethren.* 'Tis plain this is not said of the Father, but of Him who was made *perfect from his sufferings;* and we here read of this Person as one that *sanctifies*; he is the author of all that purity that his people receive. Their religion is given as well as conducted by him. This cannot be affirm'd of him as a man; for tho' in that respect he is a noble *example* of sanctification, yet He cannot be the *author* of it. As a man, he is of the same original with believers; they are *both of one*, and therefore he is not asham'd to call 'em brethren. This supposes him to be sanctified himself; but as a sanctifier, he cannot be said to call 'em brethren. They are his creation, the work of his hands, the effect of his holiness and love.

And he cannot be conceiv'd of as doing this for 'em, unless he is God; the Sanctifier must be the Creator: *He that has wrought us for the self-same*

ſame thing is God, and he can be no other. *David* begs for it under a proper title, and from a proper hand: *Create in me a clean heart, O God. I will ſprinkle clean water upon you, and you ſhall be clean*, Saith he in the old Teſtament. *It is God that works in us both to will and to do*; Saith the Apoſtle in the new. *Of his own will has he begotten us again by the word of truth, that we might be the firſt-fruits unto his creatures.* Can we think after ſo many claims of the Divine Nature to the work of Sanctification, that it ſhould ever be attributed to a creature? Muſt it be ſaid of one who is not God, that it's *He who ſanctifies?* Is he not only the object but the author of your faith? Well, if he has made you believers, as he certainly has, then there is in you the exceeding greatneſs of an *Almighty power*; no leſs than that which rais'd himſelf from the dead, and ſet him at the right hand of the Majeſty on high.

SERM. XXXVIII. Pſ. li. 10. Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Phil. ii. 13. Jam. i. 17.

And beſides, how can any act of faith produce ſuch a turn within us, that whilſt we ſee him, we are *chang'd from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord*, unleſs the object on which it fixes be God? We are *to the praiſe of his glory who have truſted in Chriſt, after we have heard the word of truth, the Goſpel of our ſalvation; in whom after we have believ'd, we are ſeal'd with the holy Spirit of promiſe.* The reſembling virtue is not in the principle, but in the object. We ſee a thouſand things and believe 'em, that do not make us like themſelves: and how comes it to paſs, that when we ſee Chriſt as he is, *we ſhall be like him*, but only that he has a power of creation in himſelf? To this purpoſe he is propos'd to our faith. For this end we are to believe *in him*; not only believe him, that he is the Meſſiah, the Perſon appointed by God to treat with men, but we believe *in him*, that *by him* we may have the life begun, *in him*

2 Cor. iii. 18. Eph. i. 12, 13.

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'Tis a very poor and low notion of Christianity, to think that it requires no more than an assent that Christ is the Messiah, the anointed of God, and that they that thus believe shall be sav'd; as if it was enough, that a man's sentiments kept him from being either a *Jew* or a *Mahometan*. I dare
Jam. ii. 18. say, *the Devils believe* in this sense, and they *tremble* at it. But if we are to talk of faith as the Scripture does, we must make a great deal more of it. 'Tis a principle that does not only pay an homage, but draw a life and virtue from him with whom it corresponds; and such a one can be no
Joh. i. 4. less than God. *In him was life, and that life was the light of men*, is an expression that imports a Deity, as full as any words can do: *The life was*
& Joh. i. 2. *manifest, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew to you the eternal life that was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.*

But now, if people do not look upon him as God, who is thus believ'd on in the world, as I don't see how they can pay a proper veneration to him, so there's no resemblance that they can desire to have of him. 'Tis in vain to hope that looking to him will make you like him, unless there is a creating virtue either in the act or the object. Either faith itself must have the power of changing you, or it must be in Him whom you thus
Phil. iii. 21. contemplate. *He will at last change your vile bodies, like unto his glorious body*; and for that he must have *a power that subdues all things to himself.* And does he speak of any less when he tells *Paul, That*
Acts xxvi. 18. *He will open their eyes, and turn 'em from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them who are sanctified by the faith that is in him?* Their sanctification is begun by him in open-

ing

ing their eyes, and it is always consider'd in him. This then is the first account that you may take of godliness, that it is a principle of subjection and conformity to Christ; and it could not be either of these, if he was not God. SERM. XXXVIII.

2. This godliness does also take into it the duty that we have so good a rule for in the word of God. He that has this esteem for Christ, and this resemblance of him, *must himself walk as he also walked. He that believes in Christ must be careful to maintain good works, which are good and profitable to men. This is a faithful saying; and these things I will,* saith the Apostle, *that thou affirm constantly.* What I now mean takes into it the whole compass of duty. Herein are we to *exercise ourselves, to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and man.* But I do not see how either we are capable of regarding Christ in such an authority as to obey him, or be thus useful to others upon that ground, if we do not believe his Deity. Tit. iii. 8. Acts xxiv. 16.

(1.) Without this there must be an end of all our duty to him. As a Prophet he might declare it; but if he is not God, it is wrong for him to receive it. It involves *him* in the guilt of usurpation, and *us* in the danger of idolatry. *The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Law-giver, the Lord is our King, and he will save us,* was the free profession of the Church in the old Testament; and I can never be of opinion that we ought to talk any lower language in the new: *There is but one law-giver, who is able to save and to destroy. Lord,* say they, *thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou hast wrought all our works in us. O Lord, other Lords besides thee have had dominion over us, but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.* Are not these declarations too great a tribute for any creature? and yet in an equal strain are we taught by the new Testament to speak both *of* Christ, and *to* him. He will ordain Isa. xxxiii. 22. Jam. iv. 12. Isa. xxvi. 12, 13.

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dain peace for us, in him we must have *peace.* He has wrought our works in us, every branch in him
Tit. iii. 2. *bears fruit: I in them,* saith he to the Father, *and thou in me. We name the name of Christ,* we are call'd by it, we look upon him as *Lord of all.* 'Tis he that has ordain'd a religion for the world, and having all power both in heaven and earth, has
Mat. xxviii. 20. appointed us to *teach all things that he has commanded.*

(2.) That part of duty which has a regard to others supposes that he by whose authority we do it can be no less than God. Thus saith the Apo-
2 Cor. iv. 5. stle, *We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus sake.* He was ready to be spent among 'em; but the end of all this was for advancing the glory of a Redeemer. And can we think he intends any lower Person in that sentence than *Nehemiah* did, who professes that
Neh. v. 15. he durst not act as other rulers had done, *because of the fear of God?* Was he under an awe from his Maker? and has a Christian all his motive and restraint from a creature?

Servants are directed to keep up the duty of their relation with a decency that will recommend
Tit. ii. 13. a good profession, that they may *adorn the doctrine of* GOD *our Saviour in all things.* What God and Saviour is this who claims a propriety in the doctrine they are to adorn? 'Tis easie to see he understands it of a doctrine peculiar to Christians: they liv'd among those of *a contrary part,* as you read a few verses before. There were among 'em
Eph. i. 15. *unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision, who subverted whole houses, teaching things that they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.* They are bid *not to give heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men.* This opposition was all against the Christian doctrine. The *Jews* were no enemies to the revelation of the old Testament.

But

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But besides, he speaks of a word *manifested in due time, thro' preaching committed to him according to the commandment of God our Saviour.* This is the title under which he declares him; for he has made us sufficiently acquainted what this commandment of God our Saviour was, by telling us that the Gospel he preach'd was *not taught of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.* This is the doctrine of God our Saviour, which servants are to adorn in all things.

And we may carry the same interpretation thro' the next words, *that the grace of God* (of this God who was manifest in the flesh) *that brings salvation, has appear'd unto all men,* and *in looking for the blessed hope, we also expect the glorious appearing of the* GREAT GOD, *and our Saviour Jesus Christ*; or, as the words may be read, of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ. This agrees to the directions he gives about relative duties in other places: *Servants be obedient to them that are your masters, according to the flesh, with fear and trembling in singleness of heart as unto* CHRIST: *Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of* CHRIST, *doing the will of* GOD *from the heart; with good will doing service as to the* LORD, *and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man does, the same shall he receive of the* LORD, *whether he be bond or free.* So we read, that *one is our Master, even* CHRIST. Eph. vi. 5, 6, 7, 8. Mat. xxiii. 10.

3. This godliness demands from us a *profession* of what we believe. There must be *an acknowledgment of the truth which is after godliness.* Christ tells *Ananias* concerning *Saul, He is a chosen vessel to* ME, *to bear* MY *name before the Gentiles, and kings, and children of Israel.* Our light is to shine before men, we are every way to *hold forth the word of life, and shew the praises of him that has call'd us.* And I do not see there's any doing this, unless we are persuaded of his Divinity, be- Tit. i. 2. Acts ix. 13. Phil. ii. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 10.

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cause 'tis thus we come first to a *certainty*, and then to a *confidence* in our profession.

1.) In believing Christ to be God, we act upon a certainty: we tell mankind in plain words what our souls think of him, and do not go about with a company of uncertain sounds: *Seeing*
2 Cor. iii. 12. *we have such hope we use great plainness of speech. He that has a dream let him tell a dream; but he that has my word let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord?* 'Tis not to be thought that Christ, who seal'd the doctrine of the Gospel with his blood, and sent it abroad with such an effusion of his Spirit, ever design'd that preachers should cover their opinions
2 Cor. iv. 2. with scandalous ambiguities: *Having this ministry, we renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of the Lord deceitfully.*

A notion that will not endure plain language, is a notion that cannot bear the light, and fitter for *wizards that peep and mutter*, than the servants of the God of truth. When he bids us *blow the trumpet in Sion, and sound an alarm in his holy mountain*, he did not mean a broken trumpet, that gives out a double or a confus'd and a grating sound. There's no taking the note; for, as you find by
1 Cor. xiv. 7, 8, 9, 11. the argument, *even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? So likewise you, except ye utter by the tongue words easie to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken, for ye shall speak into the air? If I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be to him that speaks a Barbarian, and he that speaks shall be a Barbarian to me.*

Isa. ix. 6. In saying Christ is *the mighty God, the everlasting Father*, you know the meaning of the words: in
Mic. v. 2. saying that *his goings forth are of old from everlasting*, that

that *he is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever,* that *of his kingdom there shall be no end,* that *all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made*; These are open and undisguis'd expressions: whatever difficulty there is in the doctrine, there is none in the words. We refer you for arguments to plain Scripture. We say not these things as men, but the Gospel saith the same also; and we cannot suppose that God speaks unintelligibly in matters of the greatest concern to our faith and practice. SERM. XXXVIII. Luke i. 29. Joh. i. 3.

But 'tis making the whole revelation in vain, to give the expressions such a sense when they are us'd of Christ, as would be harsh and improper if applied to any other occasion. 'Tis easie to see, that God speaks of himself as he does of no one else. Nothing can be plainer, than that tho' divine titles are given to Angels and men, there's no danger of confounding them with him, or supposing that the name *God* signifies that in the one, that it does in the other. But if the account he gives us of Christ is to be understood with such limitations, 'tis pity that he has not been a great deal more distinct, and let us see that tho' the *words* he uses for himself and our Saviour are exactly the same, yet the *sense* is so widely different, especially when he has said, *I am the Lord*, or *Jehovah; that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another.* Isa. xlii. 8.

'Tis unhappy that we read of him as the *mighty God*, who is not self-sufficient, or, as they rather choose to rumble it out, not self-originated. We are confounded in these words, that *he is before all things, in the beginning with God, and from everlasting.* Such characters of the Father are always understood of a proper eternity; but when applied to the Son, they lose their meaning, and signifie not the thousandth part so much as they us'd to do; but instead of being an instruction to lead

SER M. XXXVIII. our faith, become great swelling words of vanity to confound it.

So again, we are apt to think when we read that Gen. i. 1. *in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,* that it means no more than another sentence, *All* Joh. i. 3. *things were made by him, and without him was not* Col. i. 17. *any thing made that was made:* or, that *by him all* Heb. i. 10. *things consist*; that *he has laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of his hands.* This is talking plainly, and tells the world what we have receiv'd; that the same things are said with equal force of words of the Father and the Son; and, according to our *good confession,* they are the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

But if Creation signifies in some of these Scriptures what is peculiar to the Deity, and in others what may be done by a creature, our faith is entangled by the very book that should set it at liberty; and we must look upon revelation as that which our God would not have to be understood, Isa. xlv. 19. whereas *he has not spoke in secret, or a dark place of the earth.*

Our preaching and your profession are neither of 'em such frivolous uncertain things. We are Tit. ii. 5. bid in *doctrine to shew uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned.* Certainly he does not mean speech that cannot be understood. We are not to talk of a dependent God, of an eternity that had a beginning, of an Omnipotence that is deriv'd, of a subordinate Creator, of a Person that has all the titles of Divinity, and not one of 'em just and proper. You who are bid to *give* 1 Pet. iii. 16. *a reason of the hope that is in you,* are not left to any of these shuffling ways. Mankind are to know what you would be at: error needs a disguise, but truth will not bear it. You're neither to *run,* nor to talk *uncertainly,* and we are neither to fight nor to preach as those that beat the air, who make a

noiſe and a bruſhing, but no mortal knows what they ſtrike at. SERM. XXXVIII.

Let us ſpeak the myſtery of Chriſt boldly, and not perſuade people by deceitful words one day to believe that we are with 'em, and after that explain it all away again. Theſe two arts are as diſhonourable to human nature, as they are to the Goſpel of Chriſt: confeſſions that hide the truth, and explications that darken the ſenſe. But tho' error will always have the wriggle of its author, who is a winding crooked ſerpent, yet bleſſed be God, truth will be *a ſhining light that ſhines more unto a perfect day.*

If Chriſt is not God, the caſe is clear, we ought not to call him ſo, or do any thing to delude people into a perſuaſion that we think ſo. If he is God, we may ſpeak it out without any drain to the expreſſion, and let mankind ſee that we are not leading 'em to mean more by what we ſay, than we do ourſelves. But *the words of the Lord*, thoſe that relate to himſelf, muſt have a *free courſe*, unclogg'd, unlimited, and ſo be *glorified*. 'Tis by this honeſt profeſſion that we ſhall ſtand our ground: *Our exhortation is not of uncleanneſs, nor of deceit, nor of guile; but as we are allow'd of God to be put in truſt with the Goſpel, even ſo we ſpeak, not as pleaſing men, but God that ſearches the hearts* 1 Theſ. ii. 3, 4.

2.) This gives us a confidence in our profeſſion, we take it to be a duty, according to that rule, *Watch ye, ſtand faſt in the faith, quit yourſelves like men, be ſtrong.* A faith that's not to be declar'd belongs neither to the old Teſtament nor the new. As the Apoſtle ſaith, *We having the ſame Spirit of faith, according as it is written, I have believ'd, and therefore have I ſpoken; We alſo believe, and therefore ſpeak.* This was his way of arguing, as it had been *David*'s before him, that they who do believe it are to ſpeak it. But "what a ſpirit of faith is 1 Cor. xvi. 13. 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9.

SERM. XXXVIII. "that, which is bold for concealment, and makes "a stand against professing, and turns the reasoning quite otherwise; we believe, and therefore "we will *not speak*, that reproaches a good confession, and calls it by all the odious names that "are given to the vilest notions in the world? "May it not be said upon a comparison between "these examples of the Bible, and those of later "ages, *David* I know, and *Paul* I know; *their* believing led 'em into a necessity of speaking, *but* "*who are these* dumb believers that muzzle their "faith with a pretence of charity?

There is such a thing as being asham'd of God's words before an adulterous and sinful generation. In opposition to which, our Saviour has made a noble promise to those that *confess him before men:* Such as these will *the Son of man confess when he comes in the glory of his Father.* He has a particular regard to 'em now, *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation that is coming upon the world to try all them that are upon the earth.* They that have *sought righteousness and meekness, shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger:* when such as *rejoyce in their pride, and are haughty because of God's holy mountain, are taken away from the midst of us: the remnant of Israel who do not tell lyes, nor suffer a deceitful tongue to be found in their mouths, shall lie down, and have none to make 'em afraid.* But this is little in comparison of the great reserves in another world; *for he shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admir'd in them that believe, because,* saith the Apostle, *our testimony among you was believ'd in that day.* Then will the name of our Lord Jesus Christ be glorified in you [that name which you have confess'd before men] and ye shall be glorified in him.

Rev. iii. 14.

Zeph. ii. 2, 3. ch. iii. 11, 13.

2 Thes. i. 10.

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Oct. 25. 1719.

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4. UNDER this name of godliness we may include what is peculiar to it; I mean, the *joys* and satisfaction that Christ gives to his own people. These are sometimes call'd *a hope in God*, Ps. xlii. 11. sometimes *a rejoycing in Christ Jesus*, 1 Cor. xv. 31. and sometimes *a comfort in the holy Ghost*. Acts ix. 31. They are mention'd under several names quite thro' the Scriptures, to convince us of these two things. *First*, that there is a delightful part in religion. And *Secondly*, that this is of such a nature, that it cannot be the experience of any but a good man. *He is satisfied from himself*; Christ puts it upon faith in him, that *if a person believes, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water*. Joh. vii. 38.

Now, you will soon perceive that faith in the great mystery of godliness [God manifest in the flesh] is the way to these consolations; and to that purpose I need remind you of no more than that it's *He who pardons your iniquities*. The peace that I speak of is the fruit of your acceptance, *Being justified freely by his grace, we have peace with God thro' our Lord Jesus Christ*. Rom. v. 1. Again, it's he who gives you a security of the great things that are laid up for those that love him. You are glad of the change that's begun in a reconciliation to God *thro' the death of his Son*. ver. 10. And these joys are drawn out and swell'd up from the prospect of another change,

SERM. XXXIX. when you shall be *sav'd thro' his life*; that is, as he himself has call'd it, *sav'd to the uttermost*. These are what the Apostle brings together within our thoughts, that *we have access by faith into the grace wherein we stand, and then rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

Heb. vii. 25.

Now, as it is our faith that tells us of a pardon here, and assures an arrival at heaven hereafter, and for that fixes upon Christ Jesus, so it must regard him in his deity. Without such a consideration of Him there can be none of this peace, and joy, and hope in believing, as you will see in the two particulars I have now mention'd. 1st, 'Tis as God that he forgives our iniquities. 2dly, As a God he takes us into his glory, and therefore the satisfaction that arises from a sense of the former, and a hope of the latter, supposes our belief of his Deity.

(1.) One reason of our rejoicing in Christ Jesus is, because he pardons our sins. The Scripture has given us this truth in several views. *First*, Christ as a Mediator places himself between God and man. He was *the days-man between us, and laid his hand upon us both: he is our peace.* *Secondly*, Christ as man, made of a woman, and made under the law, became a curse for us. In the former character he *procur'd* our pardon, in the latter he *deserv'd* it: *he made peace thro' the blood of his cross.* *Thirdly*, He may also be said to *give* it, as we often find he does. Now, where he speaks in that language, he appears to be no less than the great God. Laying down the price of our pardon, gives him no right to *bestow* it; that belongs to him who *receives* the satisfaction, not to him that *makes* it. Our debt was to the Divine Nature, and our discharge must be from it. The human nature could suffer, but it could not forgive; and therefore he does this, not in the form of a servant, but as one who *thought it no robbery*

Job ix. 33. Eph. xi. 14. Col. i. 20. Phil. ii. 8.

robbery to be equal with God. In order to present this argument in a proper light, I will do these two things. *First*, shew you that he who is believ'd on in the world, does and can forgive our iniquities; and, *Secondly*, that this is altogether the prerogative of a God. SERM. XXXIX.

[1.] 'Tis plain from the whole story of our blessed Saviour, that he *pardons iniquity, transgression, and sin.* There are several passages both in the old and new Testament, which tell us that the God who went before the *Israelites* from *Egypt* to *Canaan* was he who should afterwards be manifest in the flesh. Both Jews and Christians understand it of a Redeemer, the second of those three that bear record in heaven. *Moses* suffer'd the *reproach of Christ:* they who died in the wilderness *tempted Christ.* He that came from *Edom with his died garments from Bozrah, glorious in his apparel, and travelling in the greatness of his strength,* is one who has *trodden the winepress alone: in all their affliction he was afflicted.* That passage of *Moses*'s seeing God is better applied to One who was to be incarnate, than to the Father *whom no man has seen at any time.* When he proclaim'd the name of the Lord, and made his goodness to pass before him, it was in these terms, *The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin.* And when after this, we read of the Angels going before 'em, it is added, *He will not pardon your iniquities, for my name is in him.* The expression signifies a power that he has in himself of condemning or absolving.

Heb. xi. 26. 1 Cor. x. 9. Isa. lxiii. 1, 2, 3 9. Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

Now there is but *one law-giver who is able to save and to destroy. Moses* says to him *Thou God art seen of us face to face,* and prays, *I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying, The Lord is long-suffering and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity, and transgression. Pardon*

Jam. iv. 12. Numb. xiv. 14. ver. 17. 18, 19. 20, 21.

I beseech

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I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of thy mercy; and as thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt untill now. And the Lord said, I have pardon'd according to thy Word, but as truly as I live, all the earth shall be fill'd with the glory of the Lord.

Thus it was foretold, that one of his names whereby he should be call'd, was *The Prince of peace*; and that this did not only signify that he should proclaim it as a minister, and procure it as a sacrifice, but give it as a proprietor, is evident from the situation of that title. It stands upon a level with the other four, *Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father.* To these is added a fifth, that he is *the Prince of peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end*; so that our peace comes from him as a governor. *Dominion and fear are with him, he maketh peace in his high places.*

Isa. ix. 7.

Joh. xxxv. 2.

He was *born King of the Jews*, as the wise men were taught to say by the star that appear'd to 'em in their own country. And how did he open his empire? Not in the gross way that his own nation expected, but by *giving salvation to his people in the remission of their sins.* His greatness appear'd in doing away iniquity. *He finish'd transgression, and made an end of sin* in a twofold capacity; *First*, as one who had a power to do it; and, *secondly*, as one that had the merit to claim it. *Messiah* is called *the Prince*, though he was to be *cut off.*

Matt. ii. 1.

Luk. i. 77.

Dan. ix. 25, 26.

Antecedent to his suffering of death, by which he brought in an everlasting righteousness, he us'd to join those two things together which *David* admires in the most high God, *It is he who forgives thine iniquities and heals thy diseases*; and thus in a double sense *redeems thy life from destruction.* How common was it for him to say, son or daughter be of good chear, *Thy sins are forgiven thee?*

Psal. ciii. 3.

And

And again, *Go thy way, thy faith has made thee whole.* SERM. XXXIX.

Do but consider, that in such language he must design a great deal more than to work a miracle. All that was *visible* to the world, and upon which he was to raise the reputation of a *Messiah*, was doing a wonder. If they saw that the sick were cur'd in this extraordinary way, it was enough to establish the argument, that *a great Prophet was come among them, and God had visited his people.* But he speaks of things which they *could not see*, and to which the miracles that he wrought were to carry on their meditations, a pardon of sins to the recovered person as what his faith had depended on.

The prophets that perform'd several wonders never talk'd of either of these. As for instance, *Elisha* did not insist upon *faith* in *Naaman* the *Syrian*, but the cure was wrought whilst the patient was an unbeliever. It is quite otherwise in the story of Christ Jesus. He us'd very often to ask the question of those that came to him, *Believe ye that I am able?* And in some places *he did not many mighty works, because of their unbelief.* Thus he said to the man whose prayer was wavering, *If thou canst do any thing for us, help us; If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believes.* Mar. ix. 23.

So that you see it was not enough that they were to be convinced of his having a divine commission, but there must be a faith *in himself.* This lay secret to the eyes of the world, but he that knew the heart, gave testimony to it, sometimes in these words, *Thy faith has saved thee*; sometimes, *According to your faith be it unto you.* He shew'd himself more than the sovereign of nature, one who could discharge the miseries of poor creatures; he does at the same time take upon him a much greater character, as the Lord of grace; and from the

SERM. XXXIX. the fulness of the Godhead that dwelt in him bodily, he says to them that their sins are forgiven.

To his own practice he has form'd the ministry of his servants. They are to *preach the Gospel of repentance for the remission of sins. Repentance and remission of sins were to be preach'd among all nations in his name.* He tells *Saul*, that the success of the Gospel should be *the turning people from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them who are sanctified by faith that is in him:* as if he would set his mark upon faith, he does not think it enough to say, *faith in me*, but *the faith that is in* ME, because *there* it is to fix; and if it does so, I must tell you, it regards him as more than a Mediator; for under that notion it's BY *him that we believe in God, who rais'd him from the dead, and gave him glory, that our faith and hope may be in God.* But by the faith that is IN him we have the forgiveness of our sins, and an inheritance among all them that are sanctified. We do not only believe that he died for us, that forgiveness comes by him, by him as a procurer, and by him as a price, but it is *in him*, as the original disposer. Thus the Apostles preach'd and acted. *In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth*, saith *Peter* to the lame man, *Rise up and walk.* And he is also *a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins.*

Luk. xxiv. 47.

Act. xxvi. 18, 19.

1 Pet. i. 21.

Act. iii. 6.

—v. 31.

2. I must observe to you, that this belongs to none but God. That though as man he *gave himself for our iniquities, and rose again for our justification*, that is, in order to deserve and procure the blessing, yet the giving it is a glory that the Most High will never transfer to another. *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardons our iniquity, and passes by the transgression of the remnant of thine heritage?* And when the promise runs so full and free, *Let the wicked*

Rom. iv. ult.

Mic. vii. 18.

Isa. lv. 7, 8.

ed forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thought, and turn unto the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God who will abundantly pardon; on purpose both to assure the believer and to glorify himself, he adds, *For my ways are not your ways, neither are your thoughts my thoughts, saith the Lord.* q. d. "When I talk of abundant pardon, "and of having mercy, it is the language of a "God; I speak of that which creatures may ad- "mire but can never imitate." Thus saith he in another place, *I, even I am he that blots out your iniquities for my name's sake.* And the new Testament carries the matter as high, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifies*; and therefore it must be very assuming for any to speak in such a manner, as the Most High has made peculiar to himself.

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xliii. 25.

Rom. viii. 33.

It gave the *Jews* great offence whenever they heard our Saviour pronounce those words, *Thy sins are forgiven thee.* People that were astonish'd at the miracle lost all the benefits of what they saw, by an opinion that the man spake blasphemies, *because none could forgive sins but God only.* Here was an opportunity for Christ to have shewn them that this was not peculiar to the Deity, that it might be communicated to a creature; and if he had meant no more than *declaring* 'em pardon'd, there had been no room for the objection of the *Pharisees.* No doubt of it, they could remember what *Nathan* said to *David, The Lord has done away thy sin, thou shalt not die.* And had Christ said no more than that, though they might question his commission, they would never have charged him with blasphemy. Now what way does he take to answer the accusation? Not by contradicting their maxim, and the foundation they went upon [that none could forgive sins but God only] no, he leaves them in possession of that sentiment as what was true and very dutiful to the divine nature. But

2 Sam. xii. 13.

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But he goes on to assert his own right of forgiving sins, in maintenance of what he had often said, that he and the Father were one, and that whatever the Father does, the same does the Son likewise. His argument deserves your attention,

Mar. ii. 10, 11. *That ye may know that the Son of man has power upon earth to forgive sins, he saith to the sick of the palsy, arise.* This gift of healing never prov'd a power to forgive sins in any other. When *Elisha* recover'd *Naaman*, and restor'd a dead man to life, he did not pretend to pardon either of them; and therefore how can our Saviour make the one an evidence of the other, but by taking upon him a character that no prophet ever had? All their virtue was in a commission, but his was his own. They might be directed to pronounce the sentence, but he had *power even upon earth to forgive sins*, and he appeals to a miracle as the argument of it. A miracle was to witness that in his case, which it never had done in any other.

[2.] 'Tis as a God that we have any hope of glo-

Joh. x. 27, 28. ry from him. He saith, *They are my sheep, and I give to them eternal life.* Now we know that *the*

Rom. vi. 23. *gift of God is eternal life*; and surely he would never have us expect from him the greatest bounty and evidence of the Deity if he was only a crea-

Psal. lxviii. 20. ture. *He that is our God is the God of salvation*; and thus *the author of eternal salvation to all that*

Heb. v. 9. *obey him.* He may well say, *All that the Father has is mine*, when he pretends to the disposal of our everlasting inheritance.

As Mediator we have this life for his sake, and by his means; *He leads us to the fountains of living waters*, but as God he *gives* 'em and wipes away all tears from our eyes. There must be an infinite distance between *deserving* this eternal life and *bestowing* it, dying for it, and presiding over it. Our dear Lord sustains both these characters. Tho'

the notion that some would give us of him, that he is the first-born of the creation, made greater, and better, and older than all the world, comes within neither of them; and that this super-angelical Spirit became the soul of that body which he receiv'd of the virgin. SERM. XXXIX.

In this representation he is neither low enough to be a sacrifice, nor high enough to be a Saviour. They have neither made him capable of suffering for the procurement of this life, nor of being glorious in bestowing it. For in order to dying, he must have all the infirmities of a man, a soul subject to terrors as well as a body to pain; and in order to the giving of heaven, he must have *the fulness of him that fills all in all. Do no err, my beloved brethren, every good gift, and every perfect gift comes down from the Father of lights, in whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning.* Therefore whatever lower names he takes upon him to signify the reality of his humiliation, yet he always speaks up to the dignity of a God, when he mentions those things that are gifts of the divine nature. *He that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy is the only wise God our Saviour.* Jam. i. 16, 17. Jude 24, 25.

You must understand such an expression as *Peter* uses in a twofold construction, when he says to the *Jews, Ye have kill'd the Prince of life*; as man he was not the Prince of life, and as the Prince of life he could not be kill'd. They stumbled for want of distinguishing right, when he tells them, *I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men to me.* They knew not what to make of it, *We have heard out of the law that Christ abides for ever; how sayest thou then, the Son of man must be lifted up?* So that tho' they kill'd him, he had an eternal life within his empire, and what must ever be the matter of Act. iii. 15. Joh. xii. 32, 34.

his

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his donation. But by dying he appeared to be in all things like unto his brethren, and when he is call'd the Prince of life, it supposes *that* to be his property, which is the greatest and best argument that we can have of a God.

Do but examine into that peace which a believer has from Christ without any regard to his Deity: Think that he is forgiven by one who is not the sovereign, not the principally offended party. Whereas *David* prays, *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions: For against thee, thee only have I sinn'd.* According to the modern notions, our remission comes from one who is no more than a servant. We cannot conclude from hence, that *whom the Son makes free, he is free indeed*, if the Son is not supreme over his own house. If he has a superior over him, then as the Apostle says, *he differs nothing from a servant, though he be Lord of all.*

Psal. li. 1, 2, 4.

But it is from this that the peace of a believer flows; he knows that *God is judge of all*, and that he has *reconciled us to himself, not imputing our trespasses.* He also knows, that the person *in whom we have forgiveness thro' his blood* was in the beginning with God, and that Spirit by whom we are seal'd to the day of redemption, as he does the work, so he has the attributes of the Most High.

I will now discharge my thoughts of this branch in the Christian Religion with a short APPLICATION. If 'tis part of the mystery of godliness, that Christ is believed on in the world, then

1. You see how both ministers and people do best fall in with the design of Christianity; the one by preaching up this faith, and the other by receiving it. That believing in Christ Jesus will be more than a name, that it will fill the hearts and form

form the lives of his peculiar people is very true; but certainly the faith that we are promoting is something more than meer morality. Either there is to be a receiving of this report that we go about the world with, and an esteem of something that we could never have known by the light of nature, or otherwise I do not see why Christ should have come amongst us. If living with justice and mercy had been all that religion expected from you, our Redeemer might have bought you at a cheaper rate than with the expence of his blood. We need never have heard of God manifest in the flesh in order to be justified in the spirit, but might have shifted as they did in those ages and generations to whom these things were hid. SERM. XXXIX.

God has distinguish'd us in a way that has been expressive of his condescension, and if it was not necessary to our happiness, it might much better have been spar'd. But if he is believed on in the world, it supposes there are doctrines to be receiv'd which nothing but revelation could declare; and therefore when we set morality *against* these doctrines 'tis unnatural, and when we set it *above* 'em 'tis ungrateful. Christ calls himself *the light*, and tells them they must *believe in the light, that they might be children of light.* Joh. xii. 36.

We should never have known there was any more than one person concern'd in our redemption: The very name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, would have been an eternal secret, had not God given us the Bible; and as this opens to us what must have been hid for ever, so certainly it becomes us to receive the testimony. *It's life eternal to know Jesus Christ.* He manifested the name of God to the men who were given him out of the world, and they kept his word. By refusing the great mysteries of religion, we throw our selves back again into rude nature, and uncultivated hu- xvii. 3.

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manity; 'tis a scorn return'd upon all the benevolence of divine wisdom; 'tis choosing darkness rather than light; 'tis striking at the eternal veracity of God, *For he that believes not the record has made him a liar.*

1 Joh. v. 10.

2. If that's one branch of religion, that Christ is believ'd on in the world, no wonder that Satan sets himself in opposition to it. *He blinds the eyes of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine into their hearts.* In popery he converted the doctrines of Christianity into *old wives fables*, things that were unworthy of reason and revelation too. Now that the folly of that party is made manifest, he varies the malice, and works in another form; as before he hurried on the reverence of people for *human* mysteries, so now he teaches 'em to growl against those that are *divine*. If he can but any way engage you against the truth, either by denying a doctrine, or deriding a solemnity, he refuses no degrees of service. But as the testimony of Jesus calls us to oppose the *man of sin*, so it gives us the same concern that our religion be not run away with by the *men of sense*. For this also is a character that we find among the enemies of the truth, *The natural man receives not the things of the spirit of God*; and there be some who *separate themselves being sensual and not having the spirit*,

2 Cor. iv. 4, 5.

1 Cor. ii. 14.

Jude 19.

They that would not be asham'd of Christ and his words, will have a trial of their courage. Certainly if he is believed on in the world, he must be preached to the world. *How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher?* Supposing that *Paul* had never insisted on more than he did to *Felix, righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come*, would that have been *declaring the whole counsel of God?* Were these *the unsearchable riches of Christ, and*

Rom. x. 14.

Eph. iii. 8, 9.

and the fellowſhip of the myſtery that from the begin- SERM. XXXIX.
ning was hid in God? Had any authority or *advi-*
ces endeavoured to confine his miniſtry to theſe
ſubjects, *whoſe* intereſt would thoſe people have
been purſuing? They that *withſtand our words*,
when they are words of truth and ſoberneſs, are act-
ing under the enemy: they that oppoſe themſelves
and who do not *acknowledge the truth, are in the* 2 Tim. ii.
ſnare of the devil, and led captive by him at his 25, 26.
pleaſure.

3. How great a wickedneſs muſt theirs be who would hinder the faith of Jeſus in the world! I have ſhewn you under the former head that it has in it the ſpirit of Satan; and though ſome people may think it no great matter that preachers are reſtrained from inſiſting upon the heads of pure revelation, yet the impiety that this leads to is the greateſt that we are capable of. When the ſpirit of grace comes, who is to *convince the world of ſin*, he ſets his particular mark upon this, that *they be-* Joh. xvi.
lieve not in Chriſt; as if there was ſomething in that 9.
viler than all immorality. The Apoſtle calls himſelf *the chief of ſinners*; not that he was ſcandalous in his converſation, lewd and filthy in his behaviour; but *a blaſphemer, a perſecutor and injurious,* 1 Tim. i.
which were all the fruits of his *ignorance and unbe-* 13.
lief. No wonder then that they who ſet themſelves againſt the Deity of Chriſt have ſuch low thoughts of the holy Spirit who is charg'd to exalt him. But one ſerious touch of his hand is enough to divide the clouds of darkneſs, as well as to break a courſe of impiety. *The myſtery that in other ages* Eph. iii. 5.
was not made known to the ſons of men, is now revealed to the holy Apoſtles and Prophets by the Spirit.

4. What need have we to be very earneſt for that faith which is of the operation of God? *No* 1 Cor. xii.
man can ſay that Jeſus is Lord, but by the holy Ghoſt. 3.
We have liv'd to ſee that no liberties of worſhip

SERM. XXXIX. can ſecure the Goſpel we profeſs from the contempt of men. *Beware therefore leſt any man ſpoil you thro' philoſophy and vain deceit, after the rudiments of the world, after the commandments of men, and not after Chriſt.* Pray for that Spirit who will lead us into all truth. His teſtimony will be a victory over others, and a ſecurity to your ſelves. There are ſome that would ſeduce you, but the *anointing which ye have received of him abides in you; it teaches you all things, and is true, and is no lie; and as it has taught you, ye ſhall abide in him.* Endeavour to go out in his ſtrength. There is a wiſdom and a ſpirit which none of your adverſaries will be able to gainſay or reſiſt. Deſire that he will *open your underſtandings, that ye may know the Scriptures,* that the word of God may dwell richly in you; that you may not be as *children toſs'd to and fro with every wind of doctrine by the craft of men, who lie in wait to deceive; but grow up unto him in all things who is the head of the body even Chriſt Jeſus.*

Col. ii. 8.

1 Joh. ii. 26, 27.

Eph. iv. 14, 15, 16.

5. See that this end is anſwered upon your ſouls. *We preach Chriſt Jeſus, warning every man, and teaching every man, that we may preſent every man perfect in him.* But how vain will it be upon your account to have it ſaid, that this foundation which is laid in Sion, is to you a *ſtone of ſtumbling, and rock of offence?* We may ſay, as Chriſt did, notwithſtanding all the evidence that's given to the glory of his perſon, and the nature of his deſign, *Bleſſed is he whoever is not offended in him.* This faith which I am recommending to you goes deeper than a bare aſſent to the doctrines of the Goſpel. If you are no more than proſelytes or diſputants after you have been teachers of others, your ſelves may be caſt away. But ſhew by a good converſation that this is a doctrine according to godlineſs: let your duty be an argument that you take it, not as *a vain thing,* but as *your life.*

Col. i. 28.

Matt. xi. 6.

That

That you feel it in experience, and deliver it out in practice, *holding forth the word of life;* and that whatever your poor miniſters meet with here, in *the day of Chriſt Jeſus we ſhall rejoice* together, *that we have not run in vain, nor labour'd in vain. Yea, if we be offered upon the ſacrifice and ſervice of your faith, we will rejoice with you all.* Phil. ii. 16, 17.

6. Be ſure that in believing on him you regard all his perfections. There's no equivalent to his Deity. If he is a God, this cannot be denied with any poſſible reparation. The *Socinians* ſaid that he was a man, only more enrich'd with a divine power than any other. The *Arians* allow'd his pre-exiſtence, but yet made him a creature, by ſaying, there was a time when he was not. The bladder is now a little more blown, but the finer it is the thinner it is. They tell us of an *eternal emanation* to which he owes his being. This is a word contriv'd on purpoſe to confound us between beginning and no beginning, a creature and no creature, as I may ſhew you at large from the next and laſt head of our religion, that *he was received into glory.*

Nov. 8. 1719.

SERMON XL.

1 TIM. III. 16.

—*Receiv'd up into Glory.*

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THESE words give us the laſt part of our religion; concerning the whole of which we may ſay, Great without controverſie, is the myſtery of godlineſs. The Perſon ſpoke of has his name continued quite thro' the ſtory; that as it is God who was manifeſt in the fleſh, juſtified in the ſpirit, ſeen of Angels, preach'd unto the Gentiles, and believ'd on in the world, ſo he is no other than GOD, *who* is *receiv'd up into glory*.

This branch is plac'd in a good light, and receives a proper advantage from what was ſaid before. He was *manifeſt in the fleſh*, with all the ſimplicity and contempt of human nature, *as a root out of a dry ground, with no form or comelineſs in him:*

him: but it's otherwise in the next world, for there he appears in *glory*. Or, you may take the several parts of the text in this relation to one another: that tho' Christ was to be low and despis'd, yet there were honours of two sorts design'd for him. SERM. XL.

First, Some on earth, where he is *justified in the Spirit*, approv'd, admir'd, and ador'd by his own people: to which purpose he is *preach'd to the Gentiles*, that he might widen his kingdom, and carry it beyond the limits that for several ages had been set to the true religion. The success of this is agreeable to the design; for he is *believ'd on in the world*; the entrance of the Gospel was not in vain. The Spirit who had the custody of a Redeemer's honour, and was to *justifie* him, did his office, *First*, by giving the Gospel, and, *then*, by attending it.

This was a better balance to all the troubles that he met with, than any external pomp could have been. 'Twas more glorious in itself, and more desirable to him, to have converts bowing to his authority, than princes waiting at his gate. When Satan offer'd him the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of 'em, it was too little. He has more satisfaction from *the travail of his soul*, in one sinner that repents, than in all the monarchies and empires of the universe. 'Twas in this sense that he is spoke of, as one *lifting up the head*, after he had *drunk of the brook that ran in the way*. Not that he was to have an outward greatness; but *the rod of his strength he sends out of Sion*, and his way of *ruling among enemies* is by making 'em *a willing people in the day of his power*. That's one sort of honour design'd for him, with regard to which *the kingdom was to be the Lord's, and he the governor among the nations*. But then, the mystery of godliness tells us things of another nature; that as he was manifest and justified, preach'd and believ'd on; so,

Ps. cx. 7.

ver. 2, 3.

xxii. 28.

SERM. XL.

Secondly, Our thoughts are call'd after him into the place whither he is gone. It was before obſerv'd that he is ſeen of Angels, the object of their care as he is a man, of their wonder as he is a Mediator, and of their adoration as he is the God of *their* nature as well as the friend of *ours*. Now, as there were *three* branches of the Chriſtian doctrine that relate to his advancement upon earth in a religious empire; ſo there are *two* that your meditations may apply to heaven; that which I have now mention'd, his being *ſeen of Angels*, and this that cloſes up the whole account, that he was *receiv'd into glory*. You know the method in which I have conſider'd all the other parts of this ſubject, and I ſee no reaſon to change it in the laſt. I ſhall therefore

1. Open to you the meaning of this ſentence, that Chriſt was *received into glory*.

2. Make good this character that runs thro' the whole text, and ſhew you that this, as well as the reſt, belongs to him as GOD.

3. Let you ſee that this is one of thoſe *myſteries* that the natural man receives not; but the Spirit of truth ſets it home with a mighty and uſeful evidence upon the hearts of believers. And that,

4. From this principle we are led into the *godlineſs* that Chriſtianity is to promote in this world, on purpoſe to work us up for a better.

I. I begin with the firſt of theſe, and that is to open the meaning of the ſentence; or, how we are to underſtand it, that our Saviour was *receiv'd into glory*. Here are two words made uſe of, which muſt be conſider'd apart.

(1.) The *glory* that he went into.

(2.) The manner of his being *receiv'd* thither.

(1.) We read of a *glory* that he is now in, who was once manifeſt in the fleſh; and that agrees to the whole ſtream of the Bible, both in the old and new

new Teſtament. Theſe two things are always the doctrine that God reveal'd concerning a Redeemer. SERM. XL.

Firſt, That he ſhould be very mean and miſerable, *the ſeed of the woman*, and therefore born in ſorrow; the reproach of men, the abhorrence of his own nation; puniſh'd and forſaken by the God that ſent him; accus'd and tortur'd, under the curſe of his own law, as a worm, and no man, crawling upon the earth, trampled on without any care or pity. Such an unhappy life, ſuch a wretched death, was all along deſcrib'd as the lot appointed for him, by *the determinate counſel and fore-knowledge of God.* Acts ii. 23.

Secondly, There was alſo another character under which he is ſpoke of from the beginning of the promiſe. He is ſlain from the foundation of the world, and as early was he triumphant, to *bruiſe the ſerpent's head:* notwithſtanding that *his viſage was marr'd more than any man, and his form more than the ſons of men*; yet he is a conqueror, he *leads captivity captive.* And theſe are not to be daſh'd againſt one another, as ſo many contradictions, but there is a harmony, a conſiſtence in the whole ſtory. His poverty is not to be pleaded againſt his fulneſs, but was the way to it, and the ground of it. His pain and vexation were things from which he paſs'd over to the joy that was ſet before him. The *powers of darkneſs*, to which he was ſubject, had but *their hour.* After a little while, it was *his* turn to *divide the portion with the great, and the ſpoil with the ſtrong.* Now, the glory of our Saviour is mention'd in the Scripture with a great variety, to ſuit the different apprehenſions that the holy Spirit has given us of him. Iſa. lii. 14. Pſ. lxviii. 19. Iſa. liii. 12.

1.) Conſider him as *a man*, and then his glory is the advancement of that nature which he took into union with himſelf, to the right hand of the Majeſty on high. 2.) Conſider

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2.) Consider him as a *Mediator*, as one who partook of both the natures for which he was concern'd, and his glory comes under another view. Thus Angels, principalities and powers are made subject to him.

3.) He has a glory antecedent and superior to each of these; what he calls a glory *with the Father*, the same that he had *before the world was*. This is underiv'd and independent, what he has in himself, and in a transcendent communion with the other two persons of the Divine Nature.

Joh. xvii. 5.

The Scripture has given us all these in a plain distinction: for, as there are many places that make it evident the glory of the Son is inferior to that of the Father, there is between 'em the distance of a creature from a God; so there are others that we cannot understand but of an equal glory between the Father and Son, without changing the sense of the words, and making 'em signifie that in divinity, which they never did, and never could do in any thing else.

1.) I begin with that glory of our blessed Saviour, which he was receiv'd into as *man*. Indeed I ought to make an apology for this, because as the character of Deity is convey'd thro' all the branches of the mystery of godliness; as he is *God* who was manifest in the flesh, and is now receiv'd up into glory, so it is plain he speaks of *that* which is infinitely superior to the account we have of him as man. The words belonging to him as God, should be consider'd so as to keep *that* always in view.

I take the objection to be pertinent enough, but I humbly hope it may be over-rul'd by this answer: That tho' it's very true the holy Spirit in my text speaks all along of a *God*, yet it is of him as appearing *in our nature*, and managing the greatest concern *with it*. The first branch of this my-

ſtery led us to conſider him not only as a God, but as *manifeſt in the fleſh*. And tho' the glory that I am now going to enlarge upon which is given to the human nature is no proof of a Divinity, yet he receiv'd it into fellowſhip with that which *was*. SERM. XL.

He who is a God, as he had a *body prepar'd for him* in which he died; ſo That he has taken with him, and by an unſpeakable union has deriv'd unto it a glory. This glory of the human nature, which our bleſſed Saviour is pleas'd to mention, will comprehend the following particulars, and may be conſider'd as oppos'd to the humiliation that he ſuffer'd by. You know, 1ſt, That his body was weak and frail, ſubject to the ſame infirmities with ourſelves, but now it is *perfect*. 2dly, He here bare our burdens, and ſunk under his own, but now he is fully at *reſt* and quiet. 3dly, He was upon earth rejected and expos'd to ſhame, but now this Nature is admir'd with the greateſt *reputation*. 4thly, His ſoul was ſubject to the *fears* and ſorrows of life, but now he is above all thoſe impreſſions. 5thly, He wanted as we do the ſupplies of food and reſt, but now he is independent on every thing of that nature. 6thly, He was earthy, being made of a woman, but now his body is ſaid to be *glorious*. 7thly, He here ſubmitted to death, but now he *lives* for ever. 8thly, He was moving to and again, and had not where to lay his head, but now he is *fix'd*. 9thly, He was in this world as a ſervant, he ſits in the ſame nature in the other as a *judge*. 10thly, His union with the Deity was but little ſeen upon earth, to what it will be in heaven. You obſerve that all theſe particulars, except the two laſt, may be conſider'd in him not only as our head and friend, but our original and pattern, that it will be with us as it is with him.

1. One

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1. One article of glory that Christ is receiv'd into as man, or rather that into which He as God took our nature, was the perfection of that nature. He is *the holy Child Jesus*, he is made better than ever *Adam* was both in soul and body; and that's more than can be said of him here upon earth. For tho' he had no sin, nor was he tainted with the least impurity, yet there was a great deal of difference between him and our first parents, when they came fresh out of the hand of God. Christ was as holy as they, but not so strong and lively. His human nature had the Divine Image in all the spiritual characters that belong to it; but there was a greatness, a health in *Adam*'s body, and an happiness in his soul, which our Saviour had not; and the reason is plain,

Acts iv. 27, 30.

The first *Adam* was created by God to have a heaven upon earth: his paradise was to be a state of glory below; and therefore he was fram'd and wrought up in such a way as to be capable of receiving all the delights of the place; and that could not be without a full strength of body, and the utmost perfection of mind. But the second *Adam* was sent down from a heaven above, not to find one below. This earth was rather a *hell* to him, because there he endur'd what they do, the wrath of God, the curse of the law, *the wages of sin*. 'Tis said by way of dignity, that man was made *a little lower than the Angels*, as a creature *crown'd with glory and honour*; but when *Jesus was made a little lower than the Angels*, it was *for the suffering of death*.

Heb. ii. 7. ver. 9.

Upon this account *it behov'd him in all things to be made like unto his brethren*. Without that he could never have been a *faithful highpriest* to God, or *a merciful* one to us. He was to feel our infirmities, that he might be able to *deliver those that are tempted*. And as the *children were partakers of flesh*

ver. 17.

and

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and blood, he likewiſe himſelf took part of the ſame, i. e. in the way that they had it; a weak body, a contracted ſoul; the one liable to hunger, pain, and death, the other to ſorrow, miſtake, and fear, any farther than it was guided by a nature that is light, and in which there is no darkneſs at all: for we read of him, that he *grew in wiſdom* as well as *ſtature: he was found in faſhion as a man, he came in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh.* Luke ii. 52. Phil. ii. 8. Rom. viii. 3.

But now he has this nature in perfection, as good as it was when God made it *after his own image, and in his own likeneſs.* There was ſomething in the human nature in *Adam*, that bore a reſemblance of the Divine. He was made *in the ſimilitude of God.* Whatever this was, our Saviour, who was pleas'd to be without it upon earth, poſſeſſes it all in heaven. There is a glory both in his ſoul and body, which Paradiſe never knew. All the ſpiritual faculties, all the outward members are fill'd and faſhion'd, ſo as to make him *the firſt-born of every creature. He is fairer than the ſons of men.* That was not true upon earth; for *his viſage was marr'd more than any man, and his form more than the ſons of men*; but now *grace is pour'd into his lips, and God, even his God, has anointed him with the oyl of gladneſs above* every creature. Col. i. 15. Pſal. xlv. 2. ver. 6.

The human nature of Chriſt may be call'd *the beginning of the creation of God:* not that it was made *firſt*, but as it is made the *beſt* of any thing. Our firſt parents were crown'd with glory and honour, and made a little lower than the Angels. Their conſtitution was agreeable to their ſtation; as they were ſet over the lower world, they were fram'd but a little worſe than the higher. But this nature in its firſt edition, is not equal to what heaven diſcovers in the ſecond: *There is a natural body, and there is a ſpiritual body: the firſt Adam was a living ſoul, the laſt Adam was made a quickening ſpirit.* 1 Cor. xv. 44, 45. 46, 47.

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spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven.

There were but three bodies that the hand of God is said to form; all the rest he leaves to the course of nature. The first was *Adam*'s, wrought out of the earth, the second *Eve*'s, which was taken out of man; and these being the Divine workmanship were perfect in their kind, and carry'd in 'em the full glory of the nature. Angels might see what sort of creatures they were; but there's a *third* that exceeds in both, and that's our blessed Lord's. He
Heb. x. 5. speaks of it to the Father with joy, *A body hast thou prepared me.* Tho' he was made of a woman, yet God himself had the working of the materials, the preparation was all Divine. 'Twas by the *overshadowing of the holy Ghost*, by the coming
Luke i. 35. down of *the power of the highest*; and therefore upon this account, that holy thing which was born of the virgin, should be *call'd the Son of God.*

This was the masterpiece of the creation, the noblest work of God's hand. It is said of *Adam*,
Gen. iii. 19. *Out of the ground thou wast taken, dust thou art.*
Eccles. xii. 7. And it will be true of us all, that *the dust shall return to the earth, as it was*; but there was *a holy*
Psal. xvi. 10. *One* who should *never see corruption.* 'Tis true, this glory was much hid during the time of his life: He was far from being seen to an advantage here. When his face did once shine as the sun,
Mat. xvii. 2. it was a *transfiguration*; and therefore he is taken up, where he appears to be made so *much better than*
Heb. i. 4. *the Angels*, as a man, as he has by *the inheritance* that belong'd to him as a God *obtain'd a more excellent name than they.*

Phil. iii. 21. In this he is our pattern. When he *fashions our vile bodies*, it is unto his *glorious Body.* We can make no judgment of it here. The beloved disciple was astonish'd at what he saw; tho' it's plain the vision was adapted to his capacity, and confin'd

fin'd on purpose to make it familiar; but he tells us, that *his head and his hairs were white like wooll, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire,* Rev. i. 15. *and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burn'd in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters: and he had in his hand seven stars, and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edg'd sword, and his countenance was as the sun shining in his strength: and when I saw him I fell at his feet as dead.* 16, 17. This is said by one who had so often lean'd on his bosom, and spoke into his ear; *and he laid his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not, I am the first and the last.* *Saul,* as he went to *Damascus, at midday saw a light from* Acts xxvi. *heaven above the brightness of the sun;* that is, he saw 13. *Christ Jesus the Lord.* In him we have the origi- 1 Cor. ix. nal of our happiness; for thus, in our degree, it 1. shall be with us. When we come *to the measure of a perfect man,* it is into *the fulness of the stature of Christ Jesus.*

2. The glory of the human nature in our Redeemer takes into it a full rest and quietness. Here he bare our burdens, and carried our sorrows: nay, there were several things that shew'd the imperfection of this nature. He was far from having the strength of *Samson.* Tho' he is said to have *the government upon his shoulders,* yet this cannot be understood of him as a man; for when they only laid upon him his cross, he was not able to bear it. He fainted in the day of adversity, which shew'd his strength to be small. He submitted in his private capacity to a toilsome business, as we read of his father's being a carpenter; so the Scripture has told us he was *subject to him.* When he went about after his baptism, tho' his being anointed with the holy Ghost gave him *power* in a spiritual sense, yet he complain'd of *weariness* when he sat down at the well of *Samaria.* It's observ'd that the multitude throng'd him, that he was tir'd with

long

SERM. XL. long exhortations and faſtings; and he croſs'd the ſea of *Tiberias*, on purpoſe that he might have leiſure to eat. He once taught 'em out of a ſhip, the multitude being on ſhore, leſt he ſhould ſuffer any inconvenience by the croud; and a great deal more we read of, to ſhew us that he had both the quality and the afflictions of human nature: that as he was man *born of a woman*, ſo like all others, Job xiv. 1. he was but *of few days, and full of trouble.*

We have his own ſentiments of the load that was appointed to him in the lamentations of the Pſal. xxii. 14, 15. Pſalmiſt: *I am pour'd out like water, all my bones are out of joint, my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midſt of my bowels, my ſtrength is dried up like a potſherd, my tongue cleaves to my jaws, and thou haſt brought me to the duſt of death.* This is not the Jam. i. 13. language of the Divine Nature; that *cannot be tempted with evil;* but theſe things prove that he was the man Chriſt Jeſus; and therefore in the ſtory of his life, the title that ſeems to be the moſt beloved, is that of *the Son of man;* as if he was determin'd to rivet this doctrine into the minds of his people, that as being near of kin to us, he had the right of redemption in him. He made himſelf *of no reputation*, and took upon him *the form of a ſervant*, and was made *in the likeneſs of men.*

But now, all theſe incumbrances to the human Iſa. lvii. 2. nature are over. It is ſaid of his people, *They reſt in their beds, they enter into peace, each one walking* Rev. xiv. 14. *in his uprightneſs. Bleſſed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they reſt from their labours. There the priſoners hear not the voice of the oppreſſor, there the wicked* Job iii. 17, 18. *ceaſe from troubling, and there the weary are at reſt;* Heb. iv. 9. *there is a reſt that remains for the people of God*; and into this Chriſt has led us the way. For tho' many thouſands got to heaven before his reſurrection, yet *his* was the firſt *body* that went thither out Heb. xi. 5. of the grave. *Enoch was tranſlated that he ſhould not*

not see death; but *Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.* For *David,* as the Apostle observes, *is not yet ascended into heaven.* You will see of what part this must be understood by the argument that he brings for it, *That he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.* But *Christ is enter'd into his rest, and has ceas'd from his own works, as God did from his.* SERM. XL. 1 Cor. xv. 23. Acts ii. 34. 1 Pet. iv. 1.

The great God speaks oftentimes after the manner of men, and he was pleas'd to give us this account of the creation, that when he appointed the sabbath day, *he rested and was refreshed.* With allusion to this, our Saviour's mediation upon earth was compar'd to a creation: *He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new*; and 'tis represented as a work of toil, but heaven is to him a sabbath. When he bow'd down his head upon the cross, *he said, It is finish'd.* He has gone thro' the work that was given him to do, as a faithful servant to him that appointed him. God speaks otherwise both to *Moses* and *Joshua,* than he did to Christ. He saith to the former, *Thou shalt not bring this people over Jordan,* he was to leave the design incomplete. And he speaks with such a limitation to *Joshua, The days draw near that thou must die, and yet there remains very much land to be possess'd.* But this could never be said of our blessed Lord, who *glorified God on earth, and finish'd the work that was given him to do.* Gen. ii. 3. Joh. xvii. 4.

The Apostle observes that there was a certain plan by which his enemies proceeded with him. This was laid in God's decree, and reveal'd in his book; but as they could not enter into the one, so they were strangers to the true sense of the other. And yet it's said, that *When he fulfill'd all things that were written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre.* There's Acts xiii. 29.

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now an end of those *strong cryings and tears that he offer'd in the days of his flesh.* There's no more *obedience by the things that he suffer'd.* He is said now to be *made perfect,* not only in the constitution, but in the situation of his nature. He is plac'd above all his fears and troubles, and has no burden but that which his people shall enjoy with him, *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* He saith to the Father, *I am no more in the world, but I come unto thee.*

Heb. v. 7, 8, 9.

Joh. xvii. 11.

3. The glory of Christ's human nature is distinguish'd from, and oppos'd unto that shame and reproach which he suffer'd by: *He was despis'd and rejected of men; they hid their faces from him, and esteem'd him not.* Sometimes this was owing to the meanness of his Person: *They saw no form or comeliness in him, that they should desire him;* and sometimes to the vileness of his character, *We did esteem him, stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.* As he saith, *They that saw me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted in the Lord, that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.* And again, he cries out, *Many bulls have compass'd me, strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round about, they gaped upon me with their mouths like a ravening and a roaring lion.* Every title of greatness that he took upon him became their jest. They banter'd him with a *purple robe,* put a *reed* into his hand, a *crown of thorns* upon his head, *bow'd the knee* before him, saying, *Hail King of the Jews. He gave his cheeks to them that pluck'd off the hair, he hid not his face from shame and spitting.* But he knew this would not be always: he submitted to it, like one that waits for the morning, and in the words of the prophet saith, he should *not be confounded,* because the great God was *near to justifie him,* and therefore he *set his face like a flint, and should not be ashamed.*

Isa. liii. 2, 3.

ver. 4.

Psal. xxii. 7, 8.

ver. 12, 13.

Isa. l. 6, 7.

Now,

Now, it is plain, that when he look'd upon this change of condition, he expected it in another world. He died under all the scandal that a person could have upon him; accursed by the ceremonial law, for it is written, *Cursed is every one that is hang'd on a tree:* loaded with reproach and darkness by the very people that had once own'd his miracles, he sav'd others, himself he cannot save; blasphem'd by the priests, insulted by the rabble, neglected by his followers, who stood afar off, griev'd and confounded with the sight of what they did not understand. SERM. XL. Gal. iii. 13.

But out of all these clouds he rose into glory; and tho' his name was then cover'd with darkness, yet now he has *a name above every name.* The title of *Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews* was writ upon his cross in letters of *Hebrew, Greek,* and *Latin,* to distribute his infamy all over the world; but *in this name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father.* However scandalous and filthy the highpriest's garments might appear when they were stain'd with the blood of sacrifices, yet this was no blemish to him, when he went into the holiest of all. And thus is our great high priest *glorious in his apparel*; *He has trod the winepress* of the wrath of Almighty God: *Having by himself purg'd away our sins, he* FOR EVER *sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.* Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11. Isa. lxiii. 1, 3. Heb. i. 3.

Nov. 22. 1719.

SERMON XLI.

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4. THERE's another glory that our dear Lord, as the Son of man, is now poſſeſs'd of, by which he is diſtinguiſh'd from what he was upon earth; and that is the *pleaſure* and ſatisfaction that will fill *his ſoul* for ever. Even this part of his human nature came under the weight of humiliation. He was liable to ſorrows and fears, being *in all points tempted as we are*, ſin only excepted. He was touch'd with *the feeling of our infirmities, and compaſs'd about with infirmity*, as if he determin'd in making good the bleſſing of *Abraham*, to revive the experience of *Abraham*; for it is obſerv'd of the old patriarch, when he enter'd into covenant with God, that *a horror of great darkneſs fell upon him:* and ſo it was with him, who is call'd *the ſon of Abraham*.

Heb. iv. 14. v. 2.

Gen. xv. 12.

In the tranſaction between the Father and him, tho' it was upon a counſel of peace that had been agreed on before, yet he recoils, he flinches, and cries out, *If it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me.* In that agony there was not only a preſſure and force upon his body, to make his ſweat like drops of blood; but he complains that the main weight lay more within, for *his ſoul was exceeding ſorrowful unto death.* At the entrance upon the ſolemnity, it is ſaid, that *he began to be ſorrowful, and very heavy*; not in the ſame ſenſe that the word is

Luke xxii. 44.

Mat. xxvi. 37, 38.

us'd of the disciples, that *they were heavy with sleep*, but his mind and affections were born down: *The arrows of the Almighty stuck within him, the poison whereof drunk up his spirits*; and no wonder that he complain'd of a load, when *God laid upon him the iniquity of us all.* This was all along design'd to be the chief part of his sufferings; and therefore we read not only that it *pleas'd the Father to bruise him*, but *to put him to grief.* And, as if it was not enough that he should be a sacrifice *in the body of his flesh thro' death*, he also *made his soul an offering for sin.* SERM. XLI. Isa. liii. 6, 10.

'Twas from an adversity that fell upon this part, that he bewail'd his case upon the cross, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* That cannot be understood of a nature, which as he says was still in heaven. There's no conceiving of an anger or a distance between the Father and Son as they are one; nor does the affliction he there complains of relate merely to his body; for the violence of his death was no argument that God forsook him. We know that he did not forsake the Martyrs; they were not left of God; and so, Christ might be hung upon the cross, torn with nails, and push'd with spears, hated, derided and kill'd, and yet all this while God be with *him* as he was with *them.* Psa. xxii. 1.

But the Father's forsaking him is to be understood of a cloud upon his soul, not unlike that which the damned feel; for he is said to be *made a curse to redeem them that were under the curse.* When he saith, *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell*, it intimates the nature of his torments, that he *trod the wine-press of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God.* This signifies a great deal more than his body was capable of enduring; but as he was partaker of our flesh and blood, he likewise receiv'd such a soul as we have: *His soul was an offering for sin; he shall see the travail of his soul; he poured out his soul unto death.* Gal. iii. 13. Isa. liii. 10, 11, 12.

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This, by the way, ſhews us what wretched work the new ſcheme makes of our religion, and of him that eſtabliſh'd it. Their notion is, that λόγος the Word was a created ſpirit, but far above the Angels; and that this ſpirit was made to animate the human body; and as we are compounded of ſoul and fleſh, ſo the man Chriſt Jeſus has nothing of ours about him but the external part: that the ſoul which mov'd his body was not like ours, but a ſupernatural Spirit that had ſo glorious a being before; ſo that, you ſee, having denied his proper *Deity*, and ſuppos'd him no more than a ſpirit, inferior to the great God, they will do the ſame by his *humanity*, not allowing him to be a proper man. He ſhall have nothing of God but the name, and nothing of man but the fleſh.

Are theſe the diſcoveries of our polite age? Is it by ſuch talk as this, that we are to trample upon the names and works of thoſe who have ſerv'd their ſeveral generations according to the will of God, and whoſe praiſes, till now, were in all the churches of Chriſt? Is it thus that we improve upon *the hoary heads that have been found in the way of righteouſneſs?* Are people reſolv'd to make clear work with our religion, and come among the doctrines that belong to it as *roaring lions, ſeeking what they may devour?* Shall we have a Saviour that's neither God nor man? Can they deny the reality of the two natures at once? We were told long ago, that *many deceivers are enter'd into the world, who confeſs not that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh. This is a deceiver and an Antichriſt; but look ye to yourſelves, that we loſe not thoſe things that we have wrought.* It is apparent from all the language of Scripture, that he had a ſoul inferior to what they will allow, capable of ſorrow from what it felt, and of fears from what it dreaded; to which the

2 Joh. 7, 8.

Almighty

Almighty was a terror, and which became an of- SERM. XLI.
fering for sin. Now,

The glory that this soul was receiv'd into is that of eternal quietness. There's no pain to make it grieve, no danger to make it uneasy. *He entered into his rest*, in the view of which, *he endur'd the cross, and despis'd the shame*; for I would observe to you, that Christ Jesus as man was the greatest believer that ever liv'd. We have a noble instance of his faith, that he *committed himself to him who judges righteously*. The Apostle *Peter* who brings over the words of the Psalmist to him gives us this eminent example, *David speaks concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. David's* speaking concerning him may be understood two ways, *First*, of *David's* own experience, that his support under all troubles was *having this Lord before him*; or, *Secondly*, that *David* speaks in his name, and so it must be applied to Christ, that the Lord was before *his face*; "*and therefore*, saith he, "*did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad, my* "*flesh shall rest in hope, because*, though my soul "must be thrown into something like a *hell*, yet "thou wilt *not leave* it there, no more than my "body is to be left in the grave, for *thou wilt* "*not suffer thy holy One to see corruption: Thou hast* "*made known to me the ways of life, thou shalt make* "*me full of joy with thy countenance.*

Heb. xii. 2. 1 Pet. ii. 23. Act. ii. 25, 26, 27, 28.

This varies a little from the passage as we have it in the Psalms. The Apostle does not keep to what some call plain words of Scripture, for there it is, *Thou wilt shew me the path of life, in thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.* But the meaning is this, that the soul of Christ, which had so much bitterness appointed to it, was to be refresh'd as those of his people will be. He rejoic'd as believers do, *in*

Psal. xvi. ult.

SERM. XLI.

hope of the glory of God. This was *the joy set before him,* προκειμένη χαρὰ, lying over against him. The ways of life were made known to him. It was to this nature that *the Angel appeared* in the garden *to strengthen him.* How can that passage be reconcil'd to the beloved notions of our day? In what sense could an Angel strengthen him? Not in his body, for giving strength to that would be easing it of its load; but instead of any abatement immediately after the Angel had done this, *His sweat was great drops of blood falling to the ground.* And if he had no other soul than that spirit which was so much above the Angels, how would an Angel strengthen that, for *without controversy the less is blessed of the better.* As to his body he *received* no strength, and as to his soul he *needed* none. But if you consider him possest, as he really was, of a spirit liable to be overwhelm'd with grief, and tortur'd with fear, *made a little lower than the Angels,* one of them might come down and do a friendly part to an inferior creature, as his human nature certainly was.

Luke xxii. 43.

5. The glory that he was received into as man comprehends an independence upon all those supplies that are needful here below. He wanted, as we do, the recruits of rest and food. *Meats are for the belly, and the belly for meats.* Our heavenly Father knows that we have need of these things. The Angels who appear'd in the old Testament, and put on a human form, seem'd to eat and drink. *Abraham* made a dinner for those that came to him in the plain of *Mamre. Lot entertertained Angels unawares.* 'Tis easy to conceive, that they could have several ways of conveying food out of the sight of men, and making a shew of doing what they really did not. For we are not to suppose that they, who in *that world neither eat nor drink,* would come down into this upon

any

any ſuch errand. Only they appear'd to do thus to eſtabliſh and comfort the faith of thoſe they convers'd with. SERM. XLI.

But our Lord's body was of another kind, and could not ſubſiſt without the common ways that we are forc'd to take. It is reckon'd in *Moſes* an extraordinary thing, that he ſhould be in the mount with God *forty days and forty nights, and neither eat nor drink.* 'Tis the ſame in *Elias,* who faſted ſo long, *till he came to Horeb, the mount of God.* Theſe things are indeed miraculous, that the human nature ſhould be ſo ſupported by unuſual favours. And thus we are to conceive of our Lord's being in the wilderneſs, and yet it is ſaid, that *he afterwards hungred.* His deſires for meat (as we read *he would have eat*) were ſo ſtrong, that upon this Satan raiſes a temptation, *If thou be the Son of God, command this ſtone that it be made bread.* He ſat down for mere *wearineſs* at the well of *Samaria,* and beg'd a cup of cold water from the woman who came thither to draw. But Deut. ix. 18. Matt. iv. 3. Joh. iv. 7.

Now, this body is receiv'd into glory. As he is God, and has a power of ſubduing all things to himſelf, ſo he is the author of that change that ſhall paſs upon us; as man he is the pattern or example of it. You have both theſe in one verſe. *He ſhall change our vile bodies and faſhion 'em like unto his glorious body, according to the power whereby he is able to ſubdue even all things to himſelf.* Our tranſlation flattens the ſenſe and fulneſs of the original. It is ſaid, we look for a Saviour Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ὃς μετασχηματίσει, who ſhall transform, give a new appearance to our bodies; and what we render vile body is σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν, the body of that frailty that now belongs to us. Our vanity, meanneſs and diſorders are ſeen in the bodies that we carry about with us. But theſe ſhall be σύμμορφα, conform'd to, caſt into the ſame mould Phil. iii. 21.

SERM. XLI. mould with, σῶμα τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ, the body of his glory, that which he wears in the ſtate of his reward and perfection.

It is indeed the ſame that he had below, but it moves and appears in quite another manner; no longer wanting either food or reſt. We are now maintain'd with the bread that periſhes. It does ſo in our uſing it, to put us in mind of what I obſerv'd before, *That meats are for the belly and the belly for meats, and God ſhall deſtroy both it and them.* Theſe are bodies of our vanity; but the body that our Lord has received into his glory is the ſample of what we ſhall be at the reſurrection.

I do not know that ever men of polite notions and generous principles have yet conſider'd the ſubſiſtence that the body of Chriſt has at preſent, or thoſe that his people ſhall have when they riſe again; but it is eaſy to gueſs what they will ſay. About the year 1655, one Mr. *Biddle* publiſhed a Catechiſm, wherein the anſwers were all plain words of Scripture, and in the preface to which he makes a terrible outcry about laying aſide *the form of ſound words*, thoſe that the holy Ghoſt teaches, and bringing in terms of man's deviſing: but by his queſtions, he leads on the ſenſe of the anſwer, and accordingly, when he puts the caſe, whether the great God has not a bodily ſhape as we have; whether he is not confin'd to a place, and liable to the turbulent paſſions of grief and anger; his anſwers are out of theſe Texts, where we read of *the eyes, the ears, the hands and feet of the Lord*; that his throne is in the heavens, that he grieves at his heart and repents, his wrath kindles, and his ſpirit is diſquieted.

If they will do thus by him, *whoſe dwelling is not with fleſh*, it's no wonder if they make groſs work with their expoſitions of thoſe Scriptures that relate to the bodies of Chriſt and his people, that were

were once really maintain'd with food; and the probability lies but too open, how they would understand our *sitting with him at his table, drinking the new wine in our Father's kingdom,* eating of the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God: Nay, I may add that gracious promise that relates to this world, *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; If any man hear my voice, I will come and sup with him, and he with me.* These are all of them words that the holy Ghost teaches, no other than Scripture-language; and the holy Ghost teaches how to understand them; for *to the pure all things are pure;* we compare spiritual things with spiritual, not spiritual things with carnal; *But to the unbelieving nothing is pure. Their minds* that should receive what God teaches, and *their conscience* that should obey what he commands, *are both defiled.* There is a carnality and filthiness in all their conceptions; but we know that the departed saints *hunger no more, nor thirst any more, neither shall the sun smite 'em, nor any heat.*

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Rev. iii. 20.

Tit. i. 12.

Rev. vii. 16.

6. Our Lord is said to have *a glorious body.* We once bore the image of the first *Adam,* who was *of the earth earthy;* he was *made of a woman;* he came *in the likeness of sinful flesh,* tho' not in the pollution of it. But now we are expressly told, that he has *a glorious body;* what the *words* mean we shall not be able to tell till we see what the *thing* is. We must *see him as he is;* that at present we cannot do; for as it does not appear what *we shall be,* it as little appears what *he is.* He tells *Moses, His face shall not be seen, no man can see him and live.* There is a glory even in his body, that our eyes are not able to bear. When he was transfigured before his disciples, *His face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.* His raiment then was doubtless the same poor cloathing that he took into the mountain with him. He had

Gal. iv. 4. Rom. viii. 4. Phil. iii. 21. 1 Joh. iii. 2. Exodus xxxiii. 20. Matt. xvii. 4.

SERM. XLI. had none of those soft and sumptuous garments that are fit for king's houses, and yet even then he was *glorious in his apparel.* What could this be owing to, and especially the brightness that his body appear'd with?

Isa. lxiii. 1.

Methinks he came into this world as *Moses* did out of the mount, putting a veil upon his face that his enemies should see no comeliness, that his friends might behold *a visage marr'd more than any man's*; but now he was out of their company who could bear none of his true countenance. In the mountain he will be more unlimited, and for a little time look like himself, to suit his acquaintance who met him from heaven, and to astonish those whom he took up with him from the earth. *Moses* and *Elias appeared in glory, and talk'd with him.* They made a thousand times a greater figure than he did among men; but upon the occasion of meeting with them, he will take off the veil, that *Peter, James* and *John,* who were his companions from below, might have a little sketch of what he shall be above. It is said, *The fashion of his countenance was alter'd.* Though they knew him to be the same person, yet the lustre of his face was new to them, and *his raiment white and glittering,* as if it had been full of an inward glory, and prepared to send out the rays of what it contain'd. Human nature could not bear this, it so wasted the spirits of *Peter* and his company, that they were *heavy with sleep.* It was living too fast. The attraction, the drain of such a vision was too great for these houses of clay; and they just awake again to *see his glory, and the two men that were with him.* And yet,

Luk. ix. 31.

This was nothing comparable to the body that he has in heaven. 'Tis now rewarded for all the meanness that it submitted to, *the shame and spitting* that it suffered by. The martyr *Stephen,* when he saw

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saw the heavens open'd, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, is said, to *look stedfastly thither*. He valued no noise of people, no rattling of stones. He might be joyfully untouch'd with all the thunder of death and the roar of devils, when he look'd stedfastly to heaven, as if his soul was to go out through those eyes at which this glory came in, and immediately pass from seeing to taking, feeding and possessing for ever. Such a vision would have kill'd him without the execution of stoning; human nature might die away in that happy gaze, as if his soul was not driven out by the wrath of this world, but lick'd up by the strength of another; exhal'd, allur'd, and suck'd away by the throne of the Lamb. Act. vii. 55.

What a body was this! what a glory is it received into! it outshines the sun in all its brightness. *Saul's* eyes were scorch'd with what he saw, a sort of scales grew upon them which held three days and three nights. *He could not see for the glory of the light.* When our Lord comes to sit *on a great white throne, from his face the heaven and the earth will flee away, and there shall be found no place for 'em.* ix. 7. Rev. xx. 11.

Well may it be said that it does not appear what we shall be, when we are told that like unto this glorious body ours are to be fashion'd in all things. Hence we read of *a spiritual body*. Philosophy would call this a contradiction, but it is oppos'd to *a natural body*, that which he had by nature, and that with which he liv'd in it. All the other descriptions of the resurrection are to help us a little, though they still leave us short of knowing what a spiritual body means; but we are told that it is rais'd *in power*, capable of doing all the work of heaven; *in glory*, fill'd and adorn'd with all the delights of heaven; it's rais'd *in incorruption*, as it was put into the grave to moulder and return back 1 Cor. xv. 44.

again

SERM. XLI. again to dust, so it is rais'd to die no more, but to be a pillar in the temple of God. That leads me to the next head.

7. The man Christ Jesus is receiv'd into the glory of an immortal life. He came down hither to
Heb. ix. 27. die. *It's appointed for all men once to die*, and so it was appointed for him; death had pass'd upon him, as it has done upon all that have sinned; for though he knew no sin, yet being made sin for us, *he became obedient to death, even the death of the cross.* He looks upon this as a trust committed to him,
Joh. x. 18. *I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again; this commandment have I received of my Father.* And indeed by this he submitted to all the meanness of our nature. 'Tis by dying that God *stains the pride of all glory, and brings into contempt all the honourable of the earth.* When tyrants and mighty men have flourish'd long enough, *he looks on every one that's proud, and brings him low, and treads down the wicked in their places; he hides 'em in the dust together, and binds their faces in secret.* This our Lord submitted to, but

His resurrection did two things; *first*, it clos'd up all the design of one death, and, *secondly*, it was
Rom. vi. 9, 10. a security against the return of another. *Christ being rais'd from the dead, dies no more; death hath no more dominion over him: For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he lives, he lives unto God.* There are two things that may be considered in our blessed Lord, his person and his office; as a man he could but *die once*, but as a priest he must have done it *often*, if he had not been more than a man; and upon this the Apostle gives us a great
Heb. ix. 25. argument, *That he should not offer himself often, as the highpriest enters into the holy place once every year; for then he must often have suffered since the foundation of the world.* Well, why does he not? Not merely because he died, for that the creatures which were

were typical of him did in vaſt multitudes, and a continual ſucceſſion. SERM. XLI.

Had he been only a man, his ſacrifice could have had no more than a yearly virtue. But now *once in the end of the world he has appeared to put away ſin*, to ſend it all a going *by the ſacrifice of himſelf. He was once offered to bear the ſin of many*, and that once was enough; ſo that now *to them that look for him, he ſhall appear the ſecond time without ſin unto ſalvation.* He obſerves again in the following chapter, that *we are ſanctified thro' the offering of the body of Jeſus once for all: Every prieſt ſtands daily miniſtring and offering oftentimes the ſame ſacrifices, which can never take away ſin; but this man after he had offer'd one ſacrifice for ſin, for ever ſat down at the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting that his enemies ſhould be made his footſtool, for by one offering he has for ever perfected them that are ſanctified.* ver. 28. x. 10, 11, 12.

Thus does Chriſt tell the beloved Apoſtle, *I was dead, but I am alive, and I live for evermore.* Rev. i. 18. He is to come down here again. His body is to live where it was before. He ſhall *come and every eye ſhall ſee him, and they that pierced him, and all kindreds and nations ſhall wail becauſe of him. This ſame Jeſus*, ſay the two Angels that ſtood in white, *ſhall in like manner come down from heaven, as you have ſeen him go into heaven. He is to be revealed from heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming fire.* ver. 10. Act. i. 11. 2 Theſſ. i. 7, 8. But it is not to live here again. This earth that was the place of his ſuffering ſhall feel his power; for when he ſends out his voice, *the earth ſhall give up his dead.* There is a *ſecond death* that comes after the ſecond reſurrection, that is, when ſoul and body ſhall be thrown together *into the lake that burns with fire and brimſtone*; as there is a firſt reſurrection that comes before the firſt death. This is what God's people have, and the other is what Rev. xx. 15.

they

SER M. XLI. they shall be deliver'd from. *Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection, over them the second death shall have no power.*

Now in this we are conform'd to Christ Jesus. In our first resurrection, we are *risen together with him,* that *like as Christ was rais'd by the glory of the Father, so we should walk in newness of life.* This is call'd a *being planted together in the likeness of his resurrection.* Well, they that are so, over them the second death shall have no power. The first indeed shall, as it had over him, but the great danger is from the second: There's but a small account made of *them that kill the body,* because after that, *there's no more that they can do:* But there is a great deal more, infinitely more that we may suffer. Now it is the happiness of believers that death comes but once to them, as it did to him.

Rom. vi. 4, 5.

8. The glory of the human nature in Christ Jesus signifies the eternal settlement that he enter'd into. Here he had no continuing city, he was a stranger and pilgrim upon earth. *The Son of man had not where to lay his head,* but went about doing good in *Jerusalem,* in *Galilee,* and *Samaria,* wandring to and again. Thus he expresses his own life, *I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the day following.* But now he *has sat down for ever at the right hand of the Majesty on high,* no more to toil and travel.

Luk. ix. 59. xiii. 33. Heb. i. 4.

This was the reward that the Father appointed to him, *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.* Sit thou there, not only as a dignity that he should be possest of, but what he shall never be driven from. He is *for ever* sat down there; 'tis an eternal dignity. He had before prepared his throne in the heaven, and thither he takes his body. *His people are before the throne day and night.* He that sits

Psal. cx. 1. Rev. vii. 14.

sits upon the throne and the Lamb are objects of their praise and adoration for ever and ever.

And this was a proper reward for the hurry that he submitted to here; in his duty he was going about from place to place, for which he sometimes gives this reason, *I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore I am sent, and he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.* Thus it was in his sufferings, he is led *from prison and judgment*; first to the high priest, and then to *Pilate*, then to *Herod*, and then back to *Pilate* again; then out to the people, and at last to the cross, driven, hal'd, and compell'd with force. As he saith, *I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me. I am gone like the shadow that declines, I am tossed to and fro as the locust.* But

Luk. iv. 43, 44.

Psal. cix. 22, 23.

Now it is fix'd: He is among things above, there *Jesus sits at the right hand of God.* 'Tis from heaven that we wait for a Saviour Christ Jesus the Lord. *The heavens have received him till the time of the restitution of all things.* The appearance he made to *Stephen* and to *Saul* was not by coming down, but by looking down; and in this he is a pattern to us. *Him that overcomes, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out.* This is the portion of our souls, and there's the same provision for our bodies. When the dead in Christ are risen, then *they that are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we be ever with the Lord.*

Col. iii. 1.

Act. iii. 21.

Rev. iii. 12.

1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.

Dec. 20. 1719.

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9. THE glory that the human nature of Christ is now received into comprehends in it the greatness and the office of a judge. This was all along design'd for him as the reward of his humiliation. *The Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son. He has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man.* When he had told them this, he open'd the way of his entrance upon the charge, *Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation.* This he speaks as a person deputed to the work, for which reason he adds, *I of my self can do nothing, as I hear, I judge, because I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father who has sent me.* These and several other Scriptures make it plain, that he is to appear upon the throne in our nature, and therefore must be considered in that transaction as a servant. For *when all things are put under his feet, then shall the Son himself also be subject to him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.* He must give back *the kingdom to God even the Father.*

Joh. v. 22. 27, 28, 29, 30.

1 Cor. xv. 27, 28.

But

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But though his coming to judgment shall be with honour to him as a *man*, yet it supposes that he has a nature infinitely above it; for we are expressly told, that *God is judge of all*, in which account he is distinguish'd from *Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant*: And in the 50th *Psalm*, when the Lord speaks and *calls the earth, from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof*, 'tis to proclaim this as an incommunicable glory, *that God is judge himself*; and indeed the characters of him who *sits in the throne judging right* are too great for our nature.

Heb. xii. 22. Psal. l. 3.

'Tis not as man that Christ can *search the hearts, and try the reins*; 'tis not as man, that he *makes the dead to hear his voice*, and causes those that hear *to live*; 'tis not from any excellency in this lower nature, that he *opens the books*, and tries all mankind by what is written there, bringing iniquity to remembrance. This is the prerogative of Deity, *I am God, and there is none besides me declaring the end from the beginning, and from antient times the things that are not yet done*. And as this perfection is necessary to a judge, so the office that our Lord appears in supposes him to be more than man, nay, more than a creature, in order to his discharge of it. When he told the highpriest that he was Christ the Son of God, he speaks of his *sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven*, which they accounted no less than *blasphemy*. This in another place he calls *coming in the glory of his Father with the Angels, to reward every man according to his work*. Upon his saying, *Ye shall see the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God*, they ask, *Art thou then the Son of God?* concluding, that this could never be the dignity of a creature.

Rev. xx. 12. Matt. xxvi. 63, 64, 65. —xvi. 27. Luk. xxii. 69, 70.

But then it may be said, that he shews himself in the very nature that he took upon him, *When*

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he comes, every eye ſhall ſee him, and they that pierced him, he is to come with the marks of their injury, and *all nations* and *kindreds of the earth ſhall wail becauſe of him.*

How different is this from the ſtation allotted to him on earth? He came not hither to judge the world, he was far from pretending to any ſuch character during his life among us. He profeſſes himſelf not to be made *a judge and divider over us.* Luke xii. 15. Inſtead of that, he took upon him *the form of a ſervant* both to God and man. He was a *ſervant of rulers.* His enemies uſed him at their pleaſure, as *one whom man deſpiſes, and nations abhor,* carried as a Lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a ſheep before the ſhearers is dumb, ſo he open'd not his mouth. He was ſubject to his parents; nay, when he became maſter of a family, though they that call'd him by that name ſaid well, yet he was *among 'em as one that ſerves.* You find him *waſhing their feet,* which was the greateſt and loweſt act of reſpect in thoſe countries; not only as a pattern of humility, but as an inſtance of humiliation. 'Tis part of the obedience that he was ſent into the world for. Thus the Evangeliſt puts it, *Jeſus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;* knowing this he conforms himſelf to it, and how's that? *He riſes up from ſupper, and laid aſide his garments, and took a towel and girded himſelf.* There was a myſtery in this action which the Spirit of grace and truth would afterwards explain to them; *What I do,* ſaith he to *Peter, thou knoweſt not now, but thou ſhalt know afterwards.* He was to be convinc'd with all other believers, that the deſign of Chriſt in taking upon him our nature was to ſink him as low as that nature could fall, not only for the ſuffering of death at laſt, but to be a ſort of *univerſal ſervant.* We ought therefore Joh. xiii. 3, 4.

not to pleaſe our ſelves, for even *Chriſt pleaſed not himſelf, as it is written, the reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.* Under this contempt did he go thro' the life that was appointed for him. But Rom. xv. 2, 3.

He has the full reverſe to all this meanneſs in being receiv'd up into glory. He is now no longer the ſervant of rulers, of diſciples, or of enemies. *Every tongue muſt confeſs that Jeſus is Lord to the glory of God the Father.* The very nature that appeared as *a Plant out of a dry ground*, ſhrivel'd, wither'd and defil'd, is now to be plac'd on a throne. He does not lay aſide his humanity till the work of judgment is over, and put on ſtate by hiding it; no, but in the very fleſh and blood with which he liv'd ſo meanly ſhall we *behold the glory that the Father has given him.* He is as much found in faſhion as a man upon the judgment ſeat as he was upon the croſs. *All nations* are to be collected and crouded *before him*; and he is ſo far from being aſhamed of his converſation among us, that the trial of that day all along ſuppoſes it. *I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me no drink.* The meaning, as he himſelf explains it, is, that his people were ſo us'd in a wicked world; but however, his putting it into theſe terms is a memorial that he was among us, and liable to the ſame uſage. Phil. ii. 10. Iſa. liii. 2. John xvii. 24. Matt. xxv. 32, 41, 42.

Nay, in this quality ſhall he judge the very devils; they are to ſtand and tremble before a nature lower than their own: As in that nature he ſubdued 'em, and took from them *the power of death*, ſo in that nature he will condemn and lay upon them the puniſhment of death. *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate* toſs'd him from one to another. His name and his people ſince that time have been the jeſt of *kings*; but when his wrath is kindled, they above all others are to *periſh from the way.* Whatever Pſal. ii. 10.

SERM. XLII. ever his title was formerly, 'tis now *the Bleſſed, and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.* 'Tis part of his royalty. As a Prophet he is the *faithful witneſs*, as a Prieſt *the firſt begotten from the dead*, and as a King *the prince of the kings of the earth.* Thus he was reveal'd to *Ezekiel. Above the firmament there was the likeneſs of a throne, and upon the likeneſs of the throne was the likeneſs as the appearance of a man above upon it.*

1 Tim. vi. 15.
Rev. i. 5, 6.
Ezek. i. 26.

10. The union with the divine nature, which is the greateſt glory that the human could have, is better known, reveal'd and admir'd above. His name *Immanuel* ſignifies *God with us*, and that not meerly in a gracious preſence; for in that ſenſe God was always with his people, *known in their palaces for a refuge.* But the words are to be underſtood of an union between two natures, that he ſhould be with us as one of our ſelves, like unto his brethren, and yet be God, truly, eſſentially and eternally ſo. The people who knew him here had the diſcovery of this, *They ſaw his glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father.* They did not merely take him for an extraordinary perſon, for that the very *Jews* did.

Matt. i. 23.
Joh. i. 14.

There was no conteſt between them and their enemies, whether he was not the beſt teacher, and the moſt accompliſh'd prophet that ever aroſe in *Iſrael*; inſomuch, that they who denied his being the Son of God could not but ask the queſtion, *When Chriſt comes, will he do more miracles than this man has done?* Nay, their wild and roving way of talking about him, though it was very wrong, yet ſhew'd the prodigious opinion they had of him. Saith he to *Peter*, *Whom do men ſay, that I the Son of man am?* By that they underſtood his queſtion to be, not whom do the *Phariſees*, the perverſe and harden'd enemies of his kingdom, ſay he was; for then they would have anſwer'd, ſome ſay, thou'rt a deceiver,

a deceiver, others that thou haſt a devil, and art mad, and ſeveral that thou doſt by *Beelzebub the prince of the devils* caſt out devils. But, it's plain, they take his queſtion in another view, and therefore give ſuch an account of his reputation in the world, as we may be amaz'd at: *Some ſay thou'rt John the Baptiſt*, who but about half a year ago was beheaded, others thou'rt *Eſaias*, others *Jeremias, or as one of the prophets.* SERM. XLII.

This extravagant way of gueſſing ſhew'd their wonder as well as their ignorance. If they had not diſcover'd in him ſomething which they thought no mortal ever had, they would not have imagin'd a thing which the Scripture never ſpoke of, but was indeed the dream of platonic philoſophy, that after a man died, he was to live again. 'Twas a fooliſh imagination; but they could not any other way account for the wiſdom and authority with which he taught. And yet, tho' they ſuppos'd him more than a man, they fell ſhort of what he really was. Therefore he puts the queſtion again: *But whom ſay ye that I am? Peter anſwers, Thou'rt the Chriſt the Son of the living God.*

This good confeſſion does not only regard his *office* but his NATURE. So that if holineſs, wiſdom, and all his other capacities for the work he comes about, could have given him the title of *the Son of God*, I do not ſee but the *Jews* might have been brought to it. If they had thought, as ſome do now, that the name ſignified no more than a derivative Deity, they that ſuppos'd that he was a perſon rais'd from the dead wanted but a very little of the truth. But it is apparent what *Peter* means by *the Son of God*, was ſomething which they had not the leaſt apprehenſion of; as he ſaith, *Bleſſed art thou Simon Barjona, fleſh and blood has not reveal'd this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.* Fleſh and blood had reveal'd it to the *Jews* that he was

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an extraordinary perſon: *They knew that Jeſus of Nazareth was a man approv'd of God among 'em by ſigns, and miracles, and wonders which God did by him in the midſt of them.* His being approv'd of God, and God's working by him, which is all that ſome would have to be the doctrine of Chriſtianity, you ſee was the doctrine of Judaiſm. But his being united to God, that he and the Father were one, was always the great offence.

Acts ii. 22.

We are told by ſome interpreters now, that the oneneſs he claims to have with the Father was no other than that of conſent. If that's all he meant by it, the *Jews* would have allow'd it. A little of this critical learning among 'em then would have prevented their taking up ſtones to throw at him: ſo that the perſons who deny the *Divine* Nature might have come in ſeaſonably to have ſav'd the *human*. But this doctrine was *that rock upon which he would build his church:* and tho' the gates of hell have open'd againſt it in every age, they have never been able to prevail.

Now, this union between the two natures was ſo glorious, that even as man he is call'd *the Son of God*. Several things relating to this lower nature are brought in as reaſons of the title. Thus his miraculous conception is dignified: *The holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee, and therefore that holy Thing that ſhall be born of thee, ſhall be call'd the Son of God.*

Luke i. 35.

The commiſſion which he receiv'd at his baptiſm is another ground of the title: *Say ye of him whom the Father has ſanctified and ſent into the world, thou blaſphemeſt, becauſe I ſaid unto you, I am the Son of God?* His reſurrection *declar'd him to be the Son of God with power*; and with reſpect to this, as the Apoſtle obſerves, the Father ſaith, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.*

Joh. x. 36.

Rom. i. 4.

Acts xiii. 33.

This

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This was all along the confession of his people: *To whom shall we go but to thee, for thou hast the words of eternal life.* It cannot only mean that he proclaim'd it, and directed to it; for every preacher in that sense has the words of eternal life; but he has 'em in a way suitable to a God: *We believe and are sure, that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.* This faith increas'd by the light with which he fed it. Thus at the close of his life, he tells 'em, *The Father loves you, because ye have loved me, and believe that I came out from God. His disciples say to him, Lo, now thou speakest plainly, and speakest no proverb. By this we are sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee. By this we believe that thou camest forth from God.*

Joh. vi. 68, 69.

xvi. 27, 29, 30.

To this faith of theirs does Christ himself give a testimony in his last prayer: *They have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee, for I have given unto them the words that thou gavest me, and they have receiv'd 'em, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believ'd that thou didst send me.* And this he mentions as the grand distinction between them and others: *O righteous Father, the world has not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou didst send me.* There's no believing without this. This hypostatical union between God and man, this mystical union between Christ and his people, are the great heads both of truth and wonder: *I in them, and thou in me.*

xvii. 7, 8.

And yet it is but little, even of this that we are let into now, in comparison of what we shall come to see hereafter: *In that day,* saith Christ, *ye shall know that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and I in you.* Tho' they knew it then, and witness'd a good confession to it, yet there was more of this *light sown for the righteous.* It was not yet

ver. 20.

come

SERM. XLII. come up, as it shall do in the time of harvest with perfect evidence and full pleasure. When the men that blaspheme this union shall dread the wrath of the Lamb, then shall grace and nature in God's people be equal to one another. There will be no grace but what's become nature, and no nature that's any thing else but grace. There's to be no knowing in part, but intire daylight shall reveal the mystery, and bless the faculty. There we shall see what we now subscribe, that a Child born is the *mighty God*, and a Son given is *the everlasting Father*.

Thus have I gone thro' those glories that belong to the human nature of our dear Lord, what are given to him as a man; but you may remember I told you the Scripture informs us of other glories, those that he enjoys as Mediator between God and man, and such as he had with the Father *before the world was*. These are to have a distinct meditation, as he said to *Nathaniel, You shall see greater things than these, the heavens open'd, and Angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.* All that I have spoke of, thus far, relates to *the man Christ Jesus*; in which he has put a dignity upon our nature, and is equally the friend and the sample of our happiness, *the first-born among many brethren*. But the others are peculiar to himself; they are glories that he will not give to another. In these we are to regard him not as an example, but as a head. I shall proceed to consider 'em in their order.

Joh. i. 51.

Rom. viii. 29.

2. Christ as MEDIATOR manages the great concern that lay between God and man. Our notion of a Mediator is that he transacts for two parties, and that he may be capable of doing it with the greatest equality, he must have his character one of these ways, either by negation or by participation.

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First, there may be a mediator, or middle person in a way of *negation*, *i. e.* he has no share in either of the natures. Such a one we might have had in any of the Angels, who is neither God nor man. This is reckon'd a good character in any umpire or referree upon earth. We think it a qualification that the judge or person who determines between us hath no interest in either party, but is purely indifferent, equally unsway'd, and undetermin'd on both sides. Now this would have done, if the mediator was to be at no expence. An Angel might have transacted between God and us, if there was no more than carrying messages; but it cannot be expected that a creature who has nothing to do with either party should die by the *command* of the one, and for the *guilt* of the other. As an Angel had not a greatness to deal with God, so it would never be thought that he should have the tenderness to die for man; though he might be impartial, yet he was insufficient. The divine nature requir'd more than he could *do*, and the human nature wanted more than he could *give*. Therefore,

Secondly, A mediator may be as well fitted for his work by participation, *i. e.* having a share in *both natures*. This does as much qualify him for an equity in his proceedings, as if he had a concern in *neither*. If he is both God and man, he is as likely to move with an evenness between the two parties, as if he was neither. Had he been only God, our nature would have wanted a representative; had he been only man, the divine nature had wanted an equal, and therefore these two are united: from whence we may conclude, *First*, that the whole transaction will be steddy, fair and uniform; and, *Secondly*, that the whole management will be zealous, hearty and continued. Christ has a double interest in the mediation; he

has

SERM. XLII. has that of a God; he is to see to it, that his own eternal nature is not injur'd, obscur'd, or neglected; and then the nature he took upon him is also his own, and he must secure that from being lost, condemn'd and ruined.

Now the glory belonging to him as Mediator you may conceive of in these particulars, the stupendious union of the two natures, a separation to the work that is all his own, a discharge of the duty, an acquittance given him by the Father, the confirmation of this union for us, the wonder of the Angels and Saints as it is in heaven, and the continuance of the mediation there.

1. One glory of our dear Lord as Mediator, is the stupendious union of the two natures by which he was capable of it. This is a subject that I have but newly parted with under the former head, where I consider'd the evidence that would be given to it as a great branch of that glory that is put upon the human nature. Nothing higher, better, or more comprehensive can be said of the body and soul that were prepared for him, than that they are united to a God.

Father, Son and holy Ghost, are all represented as carrying on the work of salvation, bringing many sons and daughters to glory; and the honour that rises out of this design, the songs and praises that are filled with it, do equally regard them all. It may be said of each person, that *he is the only wise God our Saviour.* Our happiness is sometimes ascribed to one, and sometimes to another, as if each one of the three had been the sole agent. Thus
Eph. i. 3. it is *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ Jesus*: And yet our praises are directed
Rev. i. 5, 6. *to him, who has loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood:* And again, it may be said
Tit. iii. 5. without any diminution, that *we are saved by the washing*

washing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy Ghost. We have them all mentioned together, *the foreknowledge of God the Father, the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.* SERM. XLII. 1 Pet. i. 2.

However, there is something in the character of Christ Jesus as Mediator peculiar to himself. We say that he was God and man, both creator and creature. He is the only person in the divine nature who was united to the human, and he is the only part of the creation that was united to God.

The doctrine of three persons in the Deity is so plainly reveal'd in Scripture, that because people could not flatly deny it, they have tugg'd in vain at an explication, and professing themselves to be wise have become fools. The *Sabellians* imagin'd there was no other way to secure the unity of the Godhead, and yet keep up a Trinity but this, that we are to conceive of no more than one person under three sorts of names. When we look upon God as a Creator, we call him Father; as a Redeemer, he is the Son, and as a Sanctifier the holy Ghost. This delusion made the antients call 'em *Patripassians*, because they asserted that the Father suffered as truly as the Son. Thus do men lose their hold when they get out of their depth. *Sabellius* was convinc'd there could be but one God, and yet he knew that the divine attributes were plainly ascrib'd to him who came in the flesh, so that his error consisted in denying the distinction of persons. But it's plain from the whole language of the Bible, that Christ sustain'd those characters which the Father and the holy Ghost did not; neither of these appeared in our nature, was *made of a woman, or made under the law.* So that

Here's the first glory that belongs to him, who was born as a *Son*, and given as a *Child*, that his Isa. ix. 6.

name

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name ſhould be called *Wonderful:* Wonderful indeed! His human nature is *the beginning of the creation of God,* not becauſe it was made firſt, but as it is diſtinguiſhed from the whole univerſe. Though it is a creature, yet there is ſomething ſaid of it, that can be true of no other; and ſo tho' our praiſes are directed to the divine nature, and not to the man Chriſt Jeſus; we regard the Father and the holy Spirit as much as him in all our devotions; yet there is ſomething ſtupendious in his perſon, beſides the greatneſs of a God. We are to contemplate that union in him which there is in no one elſe; *for in him dwells all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily.*

Col. ii. 9.

2. The conſequence to this is his ſeparation to the work that he came about. Though ſaving the elect was a general concern, and *the three in heaven bear record to it,* yet there was a part that he took in this deſign peculiar to himſelf. *In ordaining him before the world unto our glory, the counſel of peace was between them both.* We are redeem'd by the Father and the Spirit as well as the Son. *Our God is the God of ſalvation, and to God the Lord,* to each perſon *belong the iſſues from death.* But it cannot be ſaid of any beſides the Son, that he took part of our fleſh and blood, that he died for us. *He trod the winepreſs alone.* Thus was he ſet apart to a work that none in the creation could do, and that none but himſelf in the Deity had done.

The virtue, the merit, the ſucceſs of his death, were all deriv'd from that nature which he has equally with the Father and the holy Ghoſt; but the torment, the ſuffering, the actual expence was all perſonal. 'Tis the *precious blood of Chriſt* by which we are redeem'd, who was made *manifeſt in theſe laſt times.* We may not ſay that the Father was born, or that the Spirit was crucified,

1 Pet. i. 19, 20.

I am

I am ſenſible a thouſand queſtions may be ask'd upon this ſubject, which the wiſdom of men and Angels will be unable to manage; but are we therefore to be driven out of it? Does it ceaſe to be a *truth*, becauſe it is a *wonder?* No, whatever controverſy there has been and will be in the manner of talking about it, yet *without controverſy great is the myſtery of godlineſs, that God was manifeſt in the fleſh.* God above us is to be underſtood of a nature, but God with us is the deſcription given of a perſon. This is the myſtery that we are call'd to the acknowledgment of, *The myſtery of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt, in whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge.* Col. ii. 2, 3.

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3. ANOTHER glory belonging to Chriſt as the Mediator between God and man ariſes from his diſcharge of the duty devolv'd upon him. He receiv'd our nature into an union with his own for the ſake of doing that which was left with him alone. There's none in heaven but he that undertook it, and none upon earth was able to ſucceed him in it. For there *is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Chriſt Jeſus, who gave himſelf a ranſom for all, to be teſtified in due time.* 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.

This

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This was no less important in it self, than expensive to him. He came upon earth to transact with God the things that appertain'd to the reconciliation of his people. This world having been the stage of rebellion must be the place of an atonement. He came to bear our sins, to carry our burdens, *The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all*; such a weight as no creature could be able to manage. Every believer sinks under the pressure of his own guilt; when iniquities go over his head, they are a burden too heavy for him to bear. How then would he be capable to answer for all the sins of all the elect in all the places and ages of the world? Thousands of thousands are got to glory, and vast numbers are yet to follow. Every one of these could say with *David*, *Innumerable evils have compassed me about, so that I am not able to lift up my head.*

Now there must be a full compensation made to the justice of God for the whole number of their abominations. And who was able to pay such a debt? What merit could be equal to this heap of collected guilt? If the justice of God is to be satisfied not only for every person, but for every particular crime, we must all be *concluded under sin.*

Rom. v. 6, 8. *When we were without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly; when we were yet sinners Christ died for us.*

Whatever was the meaning of *John*'s vision, when

Rev. v. 1. he *saw in the right hand of him that sits on the throne a book written within, and on the backside, seal'd with seven seals,* it gave him an inward concern; whether this was the book of the decrees, call'd in some places the book of life, which was to be of no avail till it was open'd and unseal'd; or whether it was the book of trial by which the world is to be judged, and taking off the seals was to answer the charge recorded there, I cannot pretend to determine

mine the sense of this awful emblem: But it is plain, the happiness of good people was a thing in the nearest connection to the opening of that book; that if the book was always shut, there could be no access for them, no security of the covenant, no entrance into the joys of the kingdom; and yet here seems to be a bar in the way of that design; For a *strong Angel proclaim'd with a loud voice, saying, who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?* ver. 2.

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You may argue from this, *First*, that the design of love was at a stand; that the seals upon this book hinder'd the mercy of God from taking its compass; till these were loosed nothing could be done. *Secondly*, You farther see, that it was an universal concern, what the whole creation must be attentive to; *a strong Angel with a loud voice* delivers out the proclamation: and, *Thirdly*, 'tis also evident from the nature of his cry, that whoever undertook this great affair, he must go through it in a way of merit. The question is, who is worthy to do it? This includes both a dignity of person, who is *great* enough to attempt it? and a value of obedience, who can do actions *good* enough to deserve it?

Some people make but a small matter of redemption, as if it was no more than what a creature might perform; but the Apostle tells us, that *so is no man*, no person *in heaven, or on earth, or under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.* This shews that the design was too glorious and dazzling for them; for if they could not behold it, much less were they able to unseal it. Upon this, saith the good man, *I wept much.* He thought it was heavy tidings; it render'd the whole creation insignificant to him, *because no man was found worthy to open and read the book, neither to look thereon.* Those in heaven, *Abraham, Isaac,* and *Jacob,* ver. 3. ver. 4.

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cob, Moſes, David, Samuel and the prophets, *the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect,* had as much holineſs and capacity as their natures could hold, and yet the book confounded them as well as their brethren who were ſtill in houſes of clay. Think of this, if any of you run into the vanity of praying to the Saints; there's ſomething needful to your ſalvation, which all the ſaints in heaven dare not ſo much as attempt. But

ver. 5. Whilſt the Apoſtle was all in tears, *one of the elders ſaith to him, weep not; for behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David has prevail'd to open the book, and to looſe the ſeven ſeals thereof.* Theſe titles, the Lion of the tribe of *Judah*, and the root of *David*, plainly refer to his incarnation. He was of the ſeed of *David, according to the fleſh*, he came of the fruit of his loins; but if that was all, why ſhould not any of the Angels have done it as well as he? For it's certain, when he took upon him our nature, he was made *lower than the Angels.* He no farther belong'd to the tribe of *Judah* than as a man, and nothing that he receiv'd from any relations could make him equal to that affair. Suppoſing, as ſome tell us, that as the Son of *David* he had a claim to the throne, yet what is that to the opening of a book in heaven, and the great negotiations there? Therefore you will find there is ſomething in the wording of theſe titles that ſhews him to be above the tribe of *Judah*, and the family of *David.*

Our tranſlation indeed tells us he is the Lion of the tribe of *Judah*, but that's flat and falls below the majeſty of the *Greek*, for there it is ὁ λέων ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς Ἰούδα, the Lion who is of the tribe of *Judah.* And then again, when he is called the root of *David*, it expreſſes a great deal more than the relation; for if that was all, we may rather ſay that *David* was the root of him; but

this name shews us that he communicated to *David* as well as received from him. Though *David* lived so many ages ago, he deriv'd from a person who came after him. Hence he has both those titles together, which seem to contradict one another, he is *the root and the offspring of David*; but they are to be understood in the way that our Lord's question to the *Pharisees* was to be answered: *That if David in the spirit call'd him Lord, how is he then his son?* Well, SERM. XLIII.

It is said of him here, *that he has prevail'd to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof.* Compare these two accounts together; the enquiry was about one who should be *worthy* to do it, the report is of one that has *prevail'd* to do it: which shews, as I said before, that there must be a dignity of person in him that undertook it. You see, it's reckon'd a great victory, a mighty success, that he has gone through with it: It supposes that an opposition would be made, against which he has prevail'd. This twisting and joining of the characters tells us, that in so awful an affair Christ is consider'd both in his majesty and in his merit: as one that *prevails* to do a thing that was very hard and difficult, he is call'd a *Lion*; and yet the next view that the Apostle takes of him is as a *Lamb*. As a Lion he would be in all the postures of triumph, but as *a Lamb in the midst of the throne*, ver. 6. he is like *one that has been slain*. The sacrifice of a Lamb supposes death, miery, and the lowest condition that can be; the victory of a Lion supposes quite the contrary; and therefore what is said of him in one character looks as if it came to raze out all the other; but here they are consistent, to be an eternal monument in heaven, that the success of our Redeemer was owing both to the greatness of his arm and the misery of his life. As he sustain'd a character that none other did either

× misery

SERM. XLIII. in heaven or in earth, so he went through the design for which he was consecrated. He was made a *Highpriest* for the atonement of his people, he was a *Captain* of salvation for their dependence; and he has done what was expected from him in both relations, tho' the one was an extreme to the other. Nothing could be viler and meaner than what he submitted to as a Priest, and nothing nobler and greater than what he transacted as a King.

4. He is farther glorified as a Mediator, in that the Father has given him an acquittance, and declared that he did all that was appointed to him. This he was assur'd of beforehand, and therefore at the long distance of a prophecy he saith of him, Isa. xlii. 1. *Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth.* And again, he saith, *Thou art* xlix. 3. *my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.* He gives him the name of *Israel* which he had given to *Jacob*, on account of his having *power with God and man and prevailing.* So he saith in liii. 11. another place, *By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.* And with the same confidence of being accepted does Christ himself speak, *I shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.*

His rewards are put upon his integrity and obedi- Psal. xlv. 7, 8. ence, *Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness, therefore God even thy God has anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.* This refers to the reputation that he was received up into; *All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces whereby they have made thee glad.* It was upon this that he depended in his whole Joh. x. 15. course of duty. *As the Father knows me, so I know the Father, I lay down my life for the sheep*; as if he had said, "This surrender of my life does not only "proceed from a love to the sheep, but it is the "effect of a bargain with the Father; we know

"one

" one another; I know what he has commanded, SERM.
" and he will know what I have deserv'd. XLIII.

This was *the joy set before him,* when he endured the cross. It is said, that he then *despis'd the shame.* The shame of the cross was very great, not only as a scandalous sort of death, *Cursed is every one who is hang'd on a tree;* but as by that means his enemies insulted him, and seem'd to do it with reason, *He trusted in God that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.* Then did they *esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.* But all that reproach he did not value, as he saith in the prophesy, *The Lord God will help me, therefore I shall not be confounded, therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed: He is near that justifies me, who will contend with me? who is mine adversary? let him come near unto me: behold, the Lord will help me, who is he that shall condemn me?* Heb. xii. 2. Isa. l. 7, 8, 9.

What expressions are here! He seems to challenge his enemies, and dare them to come near, tho' they crouded about his cross. He talks of God's being near, though he complain'd of his forsaking him: But all this was true, for he despis'd the shame of the cross, because of a joy set before him; that is, as it stands in the prophecy, God would *justify* him, he would plead his reproach. They insinuated that God had forsaken him, but that would soon appear to be false. He us'd to say, *He that sent me is with me, the Father has not left me alone, because I always do the things that please him.* But now when he came to die, he seems to want that divine presence; for how shall we know that what he did was pleasing to the Father? Well, that he had an evidence of two ways: Joh. viii. 29.

First, In the agony of his dying; he found, he felt a divine approbation then; tho' the human nature was to suffer under a thicker darkness than

SERM. XLIII. that which cover'd the earth, I mean a ſuſpence of the light of God's countenance, yet ſtill as Mediator he had a teſtimony given him then; and all that whole period of his ſuffering was fill'd with the Father's witneſs to him. When *Judas* went out to open the tragedy, *Now, ſaith he, is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.* The former of theſe expreſſions ſhews what he *had*, the later what he *did*, that in the ſame moment he received his approbation and diſcharg'd his duty. This he ſaid as ſoon as ever that wretch had left 'em; and as the time of his death approach'd, ſo the joys of his ſoul increas'd. When he is upon the brink of the pit, he cries out, *Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son alſo may glorify thee.* There never was any moment of his life in which the Father had not glorified the Son: He had all along *the glory of the only begotten of the Father*; and ſo conſtantly did the Son glorify the Father, that in him, ſaith the Father, *I am always well pleaſed.* But now *the hour was come* for theſe mutual glorifications, theſe exchanges of love and duty to be more abundant. In the hour of his death, as the Son went farther in his obedience to the Father, ſo he received a greater teſtimony upon his ſoul from him.

Joh. xiii. 31.

xvii. 1.

'Tis true, this is what ſinners did not ſee. The ſpear could not reach theſe inward joys, they lay deeper than the place where that went. But it's what the devils felt; though men were unbelievers, *they* believed and trembled. For in his croſs he *triumph'd over principalities and powers, he made a ſhew of them openly in the air.* And though mankind ſaw nothing in his caſe but a groſs and wretched death, yet by that he *ſubdued him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.* Thus the acquittance that the Father had given him, the divine approbation that he receiv'd in his ſufferings were plainly

Col. ii. 18.

plainly seen to the powers of darkness. They cried out, before the centurion said it, *Truly this was the Son of God.* But besides this, the acquittance must be legible even to us. There is a way for men to know, that what he did and suffer'd was approved of; and that is plain from another testimony that God gave him, and every way prepared for our conviction, and that is, SERM. XLIII.

Secondly, His resurrection. This discharged him from all farther atonements, and open'd the way to his throne. Hence he is said not only to be *delivered for our offences*, but to *rise again for our justification.* Our justification is in the death of Christ; we are pardon'd on the account of what he suffer'd; 'tis *his blood* that cleanses from all sin, and yet here it is put upon his *resurrection*, not as the price of our acceptance, but as a publick evidence to it. And therefore as the Apostle saith, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies, who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died, or rather is risen again.* Rom. iv. 25. viii. 33, 34.

There were to be two glories succeeding his trouble and death; one was, that as a Highpriest he should go into the holiest of all, to plead the virtue of his blood; and the other, that as a Judge he was to render a reward to his enemies, and a recompence to those that hate him. Now his resurrection is an argument of both these; for when he rose again, it was to *enter into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us*, be admitted nearer the mercy-seat than any creature can pretend to. When the highpriest went into the holy of holies, he did that which no person upon the face of the earth besides himself was appointed to do. He went thither *alone*, and that but *once a year.* Christ is alone in this honour, but in this he differs from the man who was typical of him, that he does not return back again; *He ever lives to make intercession* Heb. ix. 24. Heb. vii. 25.

SERM. XLIII. *for us.* Whilst he lay in the grave this honour was deferr'd; nay, whilst he convers'd with his disciples those forty days after his passion, he *had*

Joh. xx. 17. *not ascended to his Father*; but he informed his brethren, that *he would ascend to his Father and their Father, to his God and their God.* Thus the Father own'd him as a *Priest* by his resurrection.

The other honour design'd for him, and to be discover'd this way was that of a *Judge.* The A-

Act. xvii. 31. postle tells the *Athenians, God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he has ordained, whereof he has given assurance to all men, in that he has raised him from the dead.* His resurrection proclaims the character; by that it appears that he has the power of life and death; the power of the death that he suffered, and

Rev. i. 18. the life that he resum'd. *I am he who was dead, and is alive, and I live for evermore, and I have the keys of eternity and of death.* "As I have gone "through this passage, I now controul it." Thus you consider the great Mediator as one approv'd of God. 'Twas this that he himself valued above his chiefest joy; and this he had not only to the satisfaction of his own soul, but to the confusion of devils, and the conviction of men.

5. Another glory of a Mediator is that the union between the two natures is now confirmed for ever. He was not a partaker of our flesh and blood merely to serve a turn, to live with it, and die in it, and then lay it aside as a garment that is moth-eaten; no, but though from eternity he was not man, yet to eternity he shall be so. I believe a more comprehensive description was never given of him since the foundation of the world, than you have in the assemblies shorter catechism, in answer to the twenty first question. "Who is the Redeemer of God's "elect? The only Redeemer of God's elect is "the Lord Jesus Christ, who being the eternal

"Son

"Son of God, became man, and so was and conti- SERM.
"nues to be God and man in two distinct na- XLIII.
"tures, and one person for ever." I'm apt to think, a plainer and more copious sentence is not easily to be met with: every word is both open and full; there's not an expression that is either difficult or superfluous. And therefore I'll venture to say, that the men who call this a polite age, perhaps in compliment to their own dear selves, may sooner reproach this work than equal it. Here you're told,

First, What this Redeemer of God's elect *was* antecedent to his design, no less than *the eternal Son of God*. *Secondly*, you read that he *became man*; the Scripture has given us abundant evidence of both these. *Thirdly*, That he *was so* quite thro' his life: nay, *Fourthly*, That he *continues to be God and man*, as much in heaven as upon earth, and yet this without any confusion: for, *Fifthly*, It is *in two distinct natures*; the divine never mingles with the human, nor does the human rise into the divine. And, *Sixthly*, He is but *one Person* in both these natures; the natures are distinct, but not divided. And, *Seventhly*, Thus he will continue *for ever*. That as *by* this union he did his work, and suffer'd his pains, so *in that* he will possess his glory. We read oftentimes of Angels appearing to 'em under the old Testament. Whatever those bodies were, perhaps only a little thicken'd air, yet it's probable they were laid aside when the expedition was over. But as the body of Christ was more solid and penetrable than theirs, so he will always preserve it. Hence we read of the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him *bodily*; and that *because he continues for ever, he has an unchangeable priesthood*. Heb. vii. 24.

6. In this union he receives the praises and wonders of the Saints and Angels. They are *to behold his*

SERM. XLIII.

his glory, not only that of his reward, but that of his perſon. There's not any of theſe myſteries that the world do laugh at, which the believer does not wonder at. The Chriſtian and infidel are both amaz'd that the Son of God ſhould become man: that, as God he is a Son without beginning, and as man he is a Son without begetting; in neither of theſe can any one *declare his generation*. Here's the difference between him that believes and an infidel. The deſpiſers they *behold and wonder*; but it is to *periſh*. This is fooliſhneſs to them, they hate the light, they ridicule it, and cry out, not with humility, but with ſcorn, *How can theſe things be?* The ſame queſtion may be put by better people, and ſo it is but with a better ſpirit.

Eph. iii. 8, 10. Theſe are *unſearchable riches of Chriſt*: in them we find *the manifold wiſdom of God*, πολυποίκιλος σοφία a wiſdom that's roll'd up, and has laid its deſign in folds, which muſt be hid till they come to be open'd. This is among the reaſons why a believer *groans earneſtly*, *deſiring to be uncloath'd*, becauſe when he is ſo, then this wiſdom which he pries into will be unfolded. This, which is the contempt of ſinners, will be the entertainment of Saints. The myſtery of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt, is now acknowledg'd; but then as it will be more ſeen, ſo it will be better lov'd. Unbelievers are then to gnaſh their teeth in pain as now they do it in ſcorn. Their indignation at the truth will grow upon them, and become their torment as it is here their crime. They all hated to *hear* that Chriſt was God, and then they muſt hate to *feel* it. Whilſt they who have kept his name ſhall ſee his face, and as thro' faith they have believ'd the promiſes, ſo at the end of that faith they ſhall go to inherit them.

Angels

Angels themſelves, who at the time of his birth call'd him *a Saviour Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*, behold him in both natures. They lov'd him whilſt he lay in the manger; there was *a multitude of the heavenly hoſt to ſing his praiſes then.* And yet at that time the human nature was imperfect, and the divine obſcure. But now he has the complete glory that can be given to a man, and the full manifeſtation that will be the delight of a God. The man Chriſt Jeſus is the higheſt creature above all things; the God Chriſt Jeſus is before all things, and *by him do all things conſiſt*; and in his whole Perſon he is *in all things to have the pre-eminence.* Here is in him a nature that cannot be ador'd without idolatry, and yet there is another, upon the account of which, we read of the ſame praiſes given *to him that ſits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever.* SERM. XLIII.

7. Another glory belonging to Chriſt as Mediator is the continuance of the mediation; that he, having reconcil'd us to God, ſhould ever live to introduce us. Our approach to the Divine Nature muſt be thro' him who took upon him the human. This indeed being the experience of heaven, it is but little that we know of it. But from the Scripture I obſerve theſe two things,

Firſt, That this muſt be in a more familiar way than it is at preſent. The mediation is not with that diſtance and compaſs: *In that day*, ſaith Chriſt, *ye ſhall ask me nothing*; *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, whatever ye ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. And I ſay not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father himſelf loveth you, becauſe ye have loved me, and have believ'd that I came forth from God.* And yet, Joh. xvi. 23, 26, 27.

Secondly, That there is to be an eternal mediation ſeems to be the plain language of the Bible. Whatever nearneſs we have to the Divine Majeſty, tho'

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tho' it will be unspeakably more than we can pretend to now, yet it all comes this way. Thus we read of the Martyrs that came out of great tribulation, that *they wash'd their robes, and made 'em white in the blood of the Lamb.* Therefore, upon the account of that purification, *they are before the throne of God day and night, and serve him in his temple, and he that sits upon the throne shall dwell among 'em.* But yet it's added, that *the Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed 'em, and lead 'em to living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.* As he does upon our first arrival present us *unblameable and unreprovable in his sight,* so all our acceptance is still *in the beloved.* We may well therefore desire to be *found in his righteousness* here, for we shall be found in no other to eternity. Thus when we read of a happiness that's to be had in the Divine presence, the care of a Redeemer is join'd with it. There's no temple above, for *the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb are the temple of it. The city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of the Lord does lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.*

Rev. vii. 14, 15, 17.

xxi. 22, 23.

SERMON

SERMON XLIV.

Jan. 17, 1719-20.

3.) THERE's another glory which by the Scriptures we are taught to contemplate in our great Redeemer; and that is, what he had independent on his mediation, and antecedent to it: *The Lord poſſeſs'd him in the beginning of his way, before his works of old: he was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.* This, I conceive, is what he ſpeaks of in that moving prayer, *Father, glorifie me with thy own ſelf, with the glory that I had with thee before the world was.* There are three things which may be obſerv'd in the language he there uſes.

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Prov. viii. 22, 23.

Joh. xvii. 5.

Firſt, That he is a diſtinct Perſon from the Father. The Evangeliſt tells us, *The word was with God*, and here he himſelf ſpeaks of his being glorified *with* the Father, and refers to a glory that he had *with him* before the world was. This remark is deſtructive of *Sabellianiſm*. Thus he ſaith in another place, It is written in your law, that *the teſtimony of two men is true: I am one that bear witneſs of myſelf, and the Father that ſent me bears witneſs of me.*

Joh. viii. 18.

Secondly, You may alſo take notice, that he had a pre-exiſtence not only before his coming in the world, but before the very creation of the world. Tho' he prays to be receiv'd into the rewards of a ſervice done in the fulneſs of time, yet he plain-

SERM. XLIV. ly affirms that he had not only a being, but a *glory before the world was.* This lays flat the whole fabrick of *Socinianism.* And,

Thirdly, It is also evident from these words, that he had a glory independent on any concern about the redemption of his people. He enjoy'd it *before the world was*, and desires to have it again.

I do not find that this will be disputed by those who are enemies to *the present truth.* They will allow Christ Jesus every thing but his Deity; and therefore, as if they would make a more honourable composition than the *Socinians* did, they tell us, that he was *before* all worlds, that he had a glory *above* 'em; nay, that he was appointed by the Father to *make* 'em, that he is the great deputed agent in the creation, and the chief minister of state in providence. Now this glory that he had with the Father before the world was must be consider'd in one of these three explications. Either

1st, It relates to him as the Supreme Creature, the first and best work of Omnipotence; and this he prays to be restor'd to as what he had been kept out of for some time; so that his petition is no more than to go back again, to sit at the head of Angels and Saints, being made so much better than they; that his seat had been empty at the King's table; he had obscur'd the pre-eminence that was given him by creation; he wanted to be gone out of a world, where he liv'd below the sons of men, and into another, where his throne was set *above the stars of God.* Or,

2dly, This glory that he had with the Father must be understood of the relative character which he there assum'd. He consider'd himself as *ordain'd before the world* to the happiness of his people. He then *rejoyc'd in the habitable parts of the earth, and his delights were amongst the sons of men.* Thus he is call'd *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

Prov. viii. 31.

Rev. xiii. 8.

world. And upon the credit of that obligation which he put himſelf under, a proviſion was made for the elect as ſoon as they ſinn'd, and a happineſs was ready for 'em as ſoon as they died. And therefore in this ſenſe deſiring the glory that he had with the Father is a petition for the brightning up of his title: that being always known to be a Mediator between God and man, he might now be receiv'd as having anſwer'd his truſt. This to me is a more plauſible expoſition than the other, and ſtands fairer to be the ſenſe of the words. But yet, SERM. XLIV.

3dly, I am of opinion, that *the glory* which he ſpeaks of muſt be that which he had IN HIMSELF *with the Father*, and which is to be conſider'd apart from all relations to his people. He applies to the Father, not as the *giver* of it, but as a *partner* in it. 'Tis true, every one of the Saints above have a glory with the Father; but methinks there's ſomething in the words impatient of being drawn down to a low and common ſenſe. We are ſaid to be glorified *in God*, Chriſt was glorified WITH *him*; and that argues no more dependence in the Son, than it does in the Father. He here ſpeaks of that which went before any ſervice or duty. Tho' he pleads for it, after he had finiſh'd the work that was given him to do, yet he eſteems it above all the characters of a reward.

If he had been only a creature, and from the higheſt dignity had come down into the form of a ſervant, he muſt have demanded *more* than he once enjoy'd. For, ſuppoſing an Angel had gone thro' the toil and ſorrow that he took upon him, it had been no reward to that Angel, that he went back again into his place. There would be no proportion between his ſuffering of death, and making him what he was before; for the rule of recompence was, *He ſhall drink of the brook in the way, and therefore* Pſal. cx. ult.

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fore shall he lift up the head. Indeed as a man, Christ Jesus is highly exalted, *crown'd with glory and honour for the suffering of death.*

Heb. ii. 10.

But this is not the glory that he beg'd for; this glory he *had not* before the world was; 'twas all new to him. It begun upon his return to heaven; his body was never there till after the resurrection. When he is said to come down from heaven, it is not to be understood of the human nature. And therefore, tho' he begs that this may be glorified, yet it's not the thing that he designs in that part of the prayer that's now under our meditation. This had no *glory*, because it had no being *before the world was*: *'Twas not till the fulness of time came, that God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law.*

Gal. iv. 4.

And, if he only pleads to go back into that pre-eminence that he as the best creature had above all the rest, I do not see where the reward lies; he could be no higher than he was. Every thing was put under his feet after the resurrection as man, and so was every thing before as a superangelical spirit. So that here's a most grateful obedience to the Father, that has no retribution made to it. But,

If you will understand this glory that he has *with the Father*, of something that declares him *equal to the Father*, the petition is unincumber'd, and stands clear of all the force and danger that other interpretations have thrown it under.

Indeed there is one objection against it, and that is this, that if he begs for a glory that belongs to the Divine Nature, he begs for that which he had already. And to this the answer is easie enough, that he does so. And there will be no absurdity in that, if you do but consider that he delivers this prayer in the hearing of his disciples, and therefore only speaks in a supplication, what he had before

fore told 'em in a doctrine. The great instruction he had given 'em was, that *he is in the Father, and the Father in him:* and the main revelation of another world is, *In that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and the Father in me.* This was a bold assertion, and what ought to be supported with equal proof. Now, to convince 'em that it was all true, he demands that from the Father, which he had proclaim'd to his disciples. Joh. xiv. 20.

He speaks of a glory that he had with him; and this was indeed uninterrupted, he had it at the time that he desir'd it; but he uses that Petition for the establishment of their faith. 'Twas the same that he did at *Lazarus*'s grave: *I thank thee, that Thou hast heard me, and I know that thou hearest me always; but because of these that stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.* And so he says here, *I come unto thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfill'd in themselves.* If the glory that he had with the Father was only the rank that he possest in the creation, this was no reward. It cannot be said, that by restoring him to *That* God did highly exalt him, and *give* him a name above every name; because that he might demand, not from his service, but from his nature. But here he speaks of a glory that he had *with the Father*, as that which could never be exceeded, amended, or enlarg'd. xi. 42. Joh. xvii. 13.

This is what I am now call'd to lay before you. His glory as a man is the *sample* of your happiness; his glory as a Mediator is the *means of* it; but his glory as a God is the *fountain* out of which it is supplied. *I give to them,* saith he, *eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.* This is infinitely above the other two. *They* were very dazling, and threw an astonishment into all our pleasures; but in *this* we are swallow'd up. We cannot by searching find Joh. x. 28.

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out God, we cannot find out the Almighty unto perfection. When we follow a Redeemer, as he appears in *the fashion of a man, and the form of a servant*, there's a limitation upon his character, 'tis finite and bounded. But when we read that *the Word was with God*, and *the Word was God*, we are lost in a nature that has all depth and glory. And yet, thus we are to consider him, who was made of a woman, and made under the law. There are

Eph. iii. 8. *unsearchable riches in Christ.* He is not only *the elect of God, and precious*, but one exalted above all blessing and praise.

We do not worship him as a man; in that nature he's only the head of the family, *the first-born among many brethren.* Nay, we do not worship him as Mediator; for tho' that supposes him to be God, yet under that notion, 'tis *by him* that we ap-

1 Pet. i. 20, 21. proach to the Father. He was *fore-ordain'd before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who* BY HIM *do believe in God, that rais'd him from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope may be in God.* But yet,

A worship, without any rule of abatement, is given to him, and appointed for him. He is the object as well as the pattern, and the medium of

Heb. i. 6. our faith, and love, and reverence: *Let all the Angels of God worship him*, saith the Apostle; *Worship*

Ps. xcvii. 7. *him, all ye Gods*, saith the Psalmist. We do not assert this upon the foundation of synods and councils, but in the plain light of revelation. God himself has told us so; and that, not by obscure and uncertain consequences, but in palpable declarations. He that runs may read 'em. And *if this*

2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. *Gospel is hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in which the God of this world has blinded the eyes of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine into 'em.*

I will

I will ſhew you, that the glory of Chriſt is ſpoke of in the Bible as the glory of the GREAT GOD; in the ſame terms, with the ſame force and fulneſs. The Father ſpeaks of the Son, juſt as he does of himſelf; and tho' ſome vain men will pretend to bound the ſenſe of the words, yet we have no ſuch diſtinction between a ſupreme and ſubordinate God in all the Scriptures. I'll ſhew you ſome things that the Divine Nature has always claim'd as its own glory, and under every one of theſe heads you ſhall ſee, that it's *thus* we are to conceive of the great Redeemer; not as a Redeemer, but in his antecedent Being. And before I enter into the particulars, I would only give you this note upon the glory of God, that it's taken in a twofold ſenſe.

Firſt, For that perfection which he has in himſelf, and which he had eternally before there were any to own it. God had a glory, when there were no Angels nor Saints to give it. His happineſs lay in the contemplations of his wiſdom: The full object to an infinite mind was an infinite nature. 'Tis a raw and impious notion that ſome people have publiſh'd of late, that the name of God is a relative word, and he is only call'd ſo with reſpect to what he has made. A vile undigeſted fancy, and abominable both to all revelation, and all the light of nature. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadſt form'd the earth or the world, *from everlaſting to everlaſting* Pſal. xc. 2. *Thou art God.* But 'tis no wonder, that people are given up to a reprobate mind, that they who deny the Godhead of Chriſt ſhould be left to debaſe the Godhead in general. So true is the obſervation, *He that honours not the Son, honours not* Joh. v. 23. *the Father who has ſent him.* Therefore what the Scripture calls the glory of God is not always to be underſtood of the tribute and praiſes that his

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creatures give him, but the felicity and fulneſs of his own nature. That which he had before there were any to tell him ſo, and that which he will have, if the whole creation was expung'd and reduc'd to nothing. By the glory of God there-

Pſ. viii. 1. fore, I underſtand his perfection: *O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who haſt ſet thy glory above the heavens!* And yet,

Secondly, Sometimes this glory of God that we find in Scripture is to be expounded of thoſe acknowledgments that are made from the works of his hands, or thoſe diſcoveries that ariſe from what

Pſ. civ. 21. he has done: *The glory of the Lord ſhall endure for ever, the Lord ſhall rejoyce in all his works.* Thus

xix. 1. we read that *the heavens declare his glory*, and the

xxix. 9. Saints in his temple *behold his glory*. This is done very different ways: the one is the argument, the provocation, and ground of his praiſes; the other are the people who look upon what he has wrought,

viii. 3. and pay him the tribute of it. They *conſider his heavens the work of his fingers, the moon and the ſtars that he has ordained.*

Now, this glory that he has either from his works or his people gives nothing to him. It's only their admiring or ſhewing what *he is* in himſelf, by what he has declar'd to them. So that, ſhewing his glory is but founding forth the glory that was in him before. And here,

When we ſpeak of the glory of the Lord, it is to be underſtood of that which is peculiar to himſelf. We are told of *a glory that he will not give to another.* The naming of That which none but a God can have, is properly aſcribing him glory. This is talking of his wondrous works, and making mention that his name is exalted.

There are ſeveral things which by the Scripture we are taught to believe no creature can ſhare in; God has claim'd 'em as ſo many prerogatives; That

That he is a *Spirit*, that he is infinite in *knowledge*, that his *power* is almighty, that his *truth* endures for ever, that he is *holy* and *good*, that he is *eternal*, that he is the Supreme *agent* in nature and grace, and that he has a right to the *homage* of all his creatures. These are so many royalties of the Divine Nature, which I shall consider in this order; and there are three things that I would affirm of 'em all. SERM. XLIV.

1st, 'Tis very true, the characters I have now mention'd are bestow'd on creatures: they may be spirits, may have great knowledge, power, truth, and some of 'em will be eternal: they are employ'd in the works of nature and grace, and a tribute of worship is given to 'em. This agrees to the language of Scripture; but that ought by no means to take off the force of an argument, because tho' these words in a lower sense may be understood so as to imply nothing of Deity, yet

2dly, 'Tis by these very terms that God has given us an account of himself. And when he speaks of his own as a glory distinct from the whole creation, 'tis upon the head of spirituality, knowledge, power, truth, holiness, and eternity. And therefore, if there is not a meaning that these words have which is incommunicable to a creature, the accounts given us of a God are struck out of the Bible. But certainly there must be something true of him, which is true of no other. Now,

3dly, I will shew you, under every one of these particulars, that what the great God claims to himself is given to Christ Jesus: not as man, for so he would have refus'd it, but as One who is *over all God blessed for ever*. And in doing this my business is more adoration than argument; not so much to convince you of a truth, as to lead you into a temper of duty.

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1. One glory of the Divine Nature is its ſpirituality: *Thou canſt not ſee my face,* ſaith God to *Moſes; for there is no man ſhall ſee me and live.* And yet we are told of this good man, that *with him God ſpake mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark ſpeeches, and the ſimilitude of the Lord did he behold.* This our Saviour tells the poor woman of *Samaria, God is a Spirit, and they that worſhip him muſt worſhip him in ſpirit and truth.* Of this indeed we have very narrow conceptions, not being able to explain the ſpirit that is within ourſelves; but however, we muſt remove from it all that is groſs and corporeal. And tho' God has told us of his eyes, and ears, and hands, and feet, yet we are by no means to conceive ſo heavily of him, as if he was *altogether ſuch a one as ourſelves;* for *he has not eyes of fleſh, nor does he ſee as man ſees.*

Exodus xxxiii. 2. Num. xii. 8. Joh. iv. 24.

I think there's a fatality upon all thoſe who deny the Divinity of our bleſſed Lord, that they are *changing the glory of the incorruptible God* into ſomething that's beneath him. In the laſt age the moſt notorious enemy to the Deity of Chriſt repreſented the ſpirituality of the Divine Nature as a metaphyſical notion; and in oppoſition to it, very crudely tells us, that you read of God's remembring, and forgetting, and repenting, and coming down from heaven; a plain inſtance that *to them who are unbelieving nothing is pure, but their mind and conſcience are defiled.*

Tit. i. 15.

And now in our days, One that purſues the ſame argument with a vehemence, as if he thought himſelf born to do his utmoſt againſt the Godhead of Chriſt, tells us, that we are not to trouble our heads with God's omnipreſence, immenſity, and inviſibility. But, does he call thoſe acts of faith that regard the Divine perfections, a *troubling of our heads?* It is indeed receiving a notion that's above

above us, but it's far from being any trouble upon the heart of a good man to think that he approaches to one who is every where present. *Blessed be his glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.* They may boast of the protestant principle as long as they will, but such talk as this prepares us to be thrown into the sink of popery, and the vilest of all their abominations, which is making to themselves *the likeness of the great God.* SERM. XLIV. Neh. ix. 5.

When he speaks of himself it is thus, *Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord? Am I a God afar off, and not a God near at hand? Can any hide himself from my presence? David* was so sensible of it, that he cries out, *Whither shall I go from thy presence, or flee from thy Spirit? These are invisible things of him, even his eternal power and Godhead.* Christ is the *image of the invisible God.* The very heathen could say, *He is not far from any one of us.* And tho' the Apostle blames the rough idolatry they had run into, yet he mentions a principle agreeable to the voice of nature, *That we ought not to esteem the Godhead like unto gold or silver graven by art or man's device.* Thus saith the Apostle *James, God is not tempted with evil*; so that tho' we read of *tempting the holy One of Israel*, and his being *grieved with our iniquities*, yet you must not understand these passages in a way inconsistent with his eternal happiness. And though there are threatnings and rewards in which he shews his resentment and his pleasure, yet we are taught thus to speak of God, *That a man cannot be profitable to him; it is no pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous, and no gain to him if thou makest thy ways perfect.* Thus are we then to conceive of the great God, as a Spirit eternally above all the passions and confusions that come into our nature. Such a being that the spirits of just men made perfect, and the Psalm cxxxix 7. Rom. i. 20. Col. i. 15. Act. xvii. 24. Jam. i. 13.

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very Angels themſelves cover their faces in his preſence. *The heavens are not clean in his ſight.*

Now enquire whether this does not agree to what is ſaid of Chriſt Jeſus in the holy Scriptures. That as a man theſe characters do not belong to him is plain enough: He bids them *handle and ſee him, becauſe a ſpirit had not fleſh and bones as they ſaw him to have.* So that it would be in vain to ſearch out any of theſe glories for the human nature. He could not be truly a man, if he was only a ſpirit. But had he not a being that was inviſible? Does not the Scripture ſpeak of him under theſe adorations? The Redeemer is one whom *Job* calls by the name of *God.* I think there are two paſſages that muſt be underſtood of him, unleſs we violate all the laws of connexion.

Job xix. 25, 26.

The one is 1 *Tim.* i. 16. *For this cauſe I obtain'd mercy, that in me firſt Chriſt Jeſus might ſhew forth all long-ſuffering, for a pattern to them that ſhould believe on him to life everlaſting.* Here Chriſt Jeſus is conſidered, *firſt*, as the Author of his regeneration, and, *ſecondly*, as ſhewing all long-ſuffering. 'Tis the name of the Lord that he proclaim'd, *long-ſuffering and gracious. Thirdly*, he is repreſented as the object of faith; people in all ages are to believe *in him*; and *fourthly*, the fountain of happineſs, for they believe on him *to everlaſting life.* Now when he had declar'd Chriſt Jeſus ſo much his friend for what is paſt, and what is to come, 'tis the faireſt way of expounding, to ſuppoſe that the next words purſue the ſame ſubject, and that he does not ſtart from one perſon to another. *Now* ſaith he, *to the King eternal, immortal, inviſible, the only wiſe God be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* That Chriſt as Mediator was not eternal, and that he will not in that character be immortal, is plain enough, for he muſt give up the kingdom to the Father, and 'tis equally true, that he is not inviſible;

sible; but as the adversaries of his divinity do now grant that he had a nature above that which might be seen, which was born and did die, so these words may be understood of that, these passages can belong to none but the person whom he had spoke of before; and is it too much to have it said of one, who shew'd all long-suffering, and who is believed on to eternal life, that he is *the King eternal?* Are not the titles proportion'd to the account? What is said of him is but equal to what is done by him: 'Tis he whom *Moses saw*, as the glorious *invisible*. Heb. xi. 27.

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The other passage is in the same epistle, *Chap.* vi. 15, 16. He had charged *Timothy* to *keep the commandment to the coming of Jesus Christ, which* (i. e. which coming) *in his own times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only has immortality, and dwells in that light which no man can approach unto, whom no man has seen nor can see, to whom be glory and power everlasting. Amen.* These are said to be ἴδιοις καιροῖς his own times, though we know that the Father has put the times and seasons in his own power. The thing that is to be shewn at the appearing of Christ is something that the world would not believe; therefore he tells us, there are times of shewing it. And what is that he discovers? A person who is the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords. This is plainly affirm'd of Christ, as his publick and display'd character. *He has on his vesture and his thigh a name written, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.* Rev. xix. 16. Why should we think a title too much for him in one place, which can be understood of no one else in another? That the Father is the King of kings, and Lord of lords, was an unconteſted doctrine, there was no need of making that appear; but that which in his own time

he

SERM. XLIV. he would ſhew was the very thing that men denied him.

If it ſhould be ſaid, he might have this as a man, it is true enough, for he is to rule in the very nature that ſuffer'd: But then from that account he paſſes on to another, that muſt be underſtood of a divine nature, that *he only has immortality, and dwells in that light to which none can approach, whom no man has ſeen nor can ſee.* This is ſtill affirm'd, without any tranſition to another perſon, of him who is the bleſſed and only potentate, Rev. i. 5. who elſewhere is call'd *the Prince of the kings of the earth.*

That he was ſeen upon earth is not to be denied, but you find here's an inviſible part; and thus he ſpeaks of himſelf, even in the days of his fleſh, as alone equal to a mutual contemplation with the Joh. vi. 46. Father, *Not that any man has ſeen the Father, ſave he that is of God, he has ſeen the Father.* He ſpeaks here of a privilege that no creature ever had, he was alone in it. Now what but an infinite nature could behold an infinite nature? The eye muſt be equal to the object. The ſeeing of God is too much for any but Chriſt; and, which compleats the argument, the ſeeing of Chriſt was too much Matt. xi. 27. for any but God. *No man*, ſaith he, *knows who the Son is but the Father, and who the Father is but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.* 'Tis plain, theſe words are to be taken in an eminent ſenſe, for ſeveral knew the Son, and it's here ſuppos'd that many knew the Father, to whom the Son reveal'd him; but that cannot be the meaning, there was ſomething in his wonderful perſon, which requir'd an infinite mind to comprehend. None knew him but the Father.

To this glory of the divine nature does he give a teſtimony to *Philip*, whoſe deſire was deliver'd in Joh. xiv. 7, 8. theſe words, *Shew us the Father, and it ſuffices us.*

Jeſus

Jesus answers, *If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father, and henceforth ye have known him and seen him.* He does not in this contradict what he had said before, that *no man has seen God at any time*, but he declares himself so united to the Father, that *he who had seen him had seen the Father.* Not merely in the effects of his grace and power; *Believest thou not,* saith he, *that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; the words that I speak, I speak not of my self, but the Father that is in me, he does the works.*

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SERMON XLV.

Jan. 31. 1719-20.

2. ANOTHER character that the great God has taken to himself, which yet the Scripture numbers among the glories of Jesus Christ is, that he is infinite in knowledge. *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counsellor? Or who has first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and to him, and through him are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen.* Rom. xi. 33, 34, 35, 36.

This observation the holy Spirit has carried quite through *the lively oracles*; and it became him to fill his own book with these accounts of a divine wisdom that will distinguish him from every other author. For he speaks of an infinite nature as no one else

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else can do, because he *searches all things, yea the deep things of God. Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, or who has taught him?* Thus we read that *he made the earth by his wisdom, and stretch'd out the heavens by his understanding.* He is admir'd in the works of his hands, because *in wisdom he made 'em all.* We are taught to conceive of this attribute with the lowest veneration and wonder. *Great is our Lord, and of great power, yea, his understanding is infinite.* Thus we read of him as a Creator, and in the work of redemption we are to say, *To God only wise, be glory for ever.*

1 Cor. ii. Isa. xl. 13. Ps. cxlvii. 5. Rom. xvi. 27.

With this reverence and godly fear do his people approach to him. *Job* had gone so far in giving his opinion about the wonders of nature and providence, that the Almighty tells him out of the whirlwind, *He was darkning counsel by words without wisdom.* This laid him under the rebuke of his own conscience, and made him cry out, *I know that thou canst do every thing, and no counsel can be withholden from thee. I have utter'd things that I understood not, things too wonderful for me, that I knew not.* Here's a confession both of his own emptiness and the divine knowledge. And to this agrees the language of all good people ever since men began to call upon the *name of the Lord.* For as there never was any religion without the duty of prayer, so it is always suppos'd that we go to one who is able to hear us. This perfection of the Divine Nature is what we can neither deny nor multiply. It must be own'd in the great God, and cannot be given to any creature. For *he that searches the hearts, knows what's the mind of the spirit, when he makes intercession in the saints according to the will of God.* We frequently meet with one example of Omniscience, that it's *he who searches the heart, and tries the reins of the children of men.* *Peter* speaks of this as a divine title, *God who knows the hearts, bare them witness.*

Job xxxviii. 2. xlii. 2, 3. Rom. viii. 27. Jer. xvii. 10. Rom. xv. 8.

Now

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Now the queſtion is, whether we do not read of this very perfection in our great Redeemer without any abatement of language? Are not the ſame things, with an equal fulneſs of words, aſcrib'd to him that are ſpread thro' the Bible as the glory of the Father? We read of a Lord who *will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and make manifeſt the counſels of all hearts:* And in another place, that *we muſt all appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt.* Let us only compare ſpiritual things with ſpiritual; ſet the diſtant parts of Scripture in the ſame light; look at them together, and obſerve if either the Spirit of God has made any difference, or left it to the humour and pride of men to make any. If there's room for a diſtinction between a ſupreme and ſubordinate God, an original and a derivative Omniſcience, in the Bible, we will own, receive, and adore it; but if there is not, if the characters of the Father and Son are laid down with equal forms of ſpeech, how bold muſt it be for perſons of a finite nature to employ their fancies in ſetting bounds to what is infinite?

1 Cor. iv. 5.

2 Cor. v. 10.

The objections that are brought againſt our Lord's complete knowledge may be allow'd without any damage to his glory as God. 'Tis very true, that *he grew in wiſdom,* which ſuppoſes an imperfection, and that he confeſſes, there was *an hour which neither men, nor Angels, nor the Son himſelf could tell, but only the Father.* This agrees to the weakneſs and limitation of the nature that he took upon him, and ſhews that he was *in all points made like to his brethren.* He himſelf was *encompaſſed with infirmities.* But

Luk. ii. 52.

Heb. ii. 17. v. 1.

That's the wildeſt way of arguing in the world, to bring in the characters of one nature as an objection againſt the prerogatives of another, to prove that he is not God, becauſe he is man; and to confront what is ſaid in ſome places about his infinite

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perfections by those accounts that we have in others of his infirmity and trouble. If this must pass for reasoning, we may go and dash the several parts of the Bible against one another. As for example, Suppose we meet with this argument, as it's well known we often do; he that grew in knowledge, he that knew not the hour or the day of judgment could not be omniscient; but the Redeemer of the world confess'd this, and therefore he is not omniscient. 'Tis an unfair insinuation, the people that run on with such talk are throwing a veil over that distinction of natures which was always affirm'd; and therefore the question is not, whether we may not, and must not consider this Highpriest of our profession in a state of weakness and limitation, that's never denied; but the whole debate hinges upon this, whether the Scripture has given us any foundation to think and speak of him as we do of the most high God?

Are there any passages that ascribe to him an unbounded wisdom? Is he ever call'd *the searcher of hearts?* And in particular is he ever represented as knowing that day and hour which he tells us, *as the Son of man*, he did not know? Let us fairly enquire into this, and just speak as we find. Now

The former of them is what the Scripture
Col. ii. 3. abounds in. *In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.* Very early in his ministry *he*
Joh. ii. 24, *did not commit himself to man, because he knew what*
25. *was in man.* He tells the disciples, *I have chosen*
vi. 70, 71. *twelve, and one of you is a devil.* For saith the historian, *Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.* Certainly these things are not spoke of that Nature concerning which we read, that he came to the figtree if haply he might find fruit, and was so disappointed, that he curs'd it presently, and it wither'd

ther'd away. We muſt not be ſo far impos'd on as to believe, that he who could not tell the growth of a tree ſhould be able to ſee the workings of mens hearts at the diſtance of ſeveral years. There's nothing in human nature that could make him capable of knowing the thoughts of their hearts when they reaſon'd within themſelves, much leſs of foreſeeing an apoſtacy ſo far off, and calling a man a devil for what he was to do ſome years after, at a time that he made the full profeſſion of a ſaint. SERM. XLV.

The Prophets had things reveal'd to 'em on particular occaſions, but never did any of them pretend to give accounts of mankind beforehand at their own pleaſure. They were often deceived as well as others. And the Apoſtles who had the diſcerning of ſpirits could not by that be ſecure from falſe brethren who crept in unawares. No perſon ever us'd ſuch language as Chriſt did upon theſe occaſions.

Peter ſpeaks to him as a God, tho' he ſpake to *Peter* as a man. *Simon, ſon of Jonas, loveſt thou me more than theſe?* The good man does not anſwer to inform him, but makes a profeſſion of the contrary, Yea *Lord, thou knoweſt that I love thee.* Had he gone no farther than this, we might have ſuppos'd that he meant no more than that he had given evidence enough in his whole life of an affection to Chriſt and his cauſe. But you ſee he puts it upon ſomething elſe. *Thou Lord, that knoweſt all things, knoweſt that I love thee.* What could he have ſaid more of a God? What's the difference between *Job's* confeſſion, *I know that no counſel can be withholden from thee,* and this of *Peter?* Our Lord's enemies own'd him to be a teacher come from God, and ſaw God was with him, but they could not go this length. They took him for a wonderful perſon, but aſcribing to him *the knowledge of all things* muſt have been condemn'd for blaſphemy. Joh. xxi. 16, 17.

How

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How vain is it to confront such a passage as this with the compliment of the woman of *Tekoah* to *David, My Lord is wise as an Angel of God to know all things that are done in the earth?* Is there any comparison between the flattery of a deceitful person, who was hired to be the tool of a hungry courtier, and that of an Apostle in his conversation with one who had been dead and was then alive? I shall not entertain a suspicion so rude as to think you need to be told the difference between these two cases; and only mention it to shew you how low that cause must run, that can serve it self by these profane and vain bablings.

2 Sam. xiv. 20.

Solomon in his dedication to the temple had as awful thoughts of the divine perfection as a man could be fill'd with, and in the warmth of his devotion uses these words, *Thou, even thou* ONLY, *knowest the hearts of all the children of men.* From whence it appear'd to be his opinion, that as God look'd into the heart, so *none but* HE *could do it.* This was an incommunicable glory; how then are we to conceive of what the great Redeemer saith, *All the churches shall know that I am* HE *that searches the hearts and tries the reins, and I will render to every man according to his works.* Are all the churches to know that omniscience is a perfection transferr'd, a glory that God gives to another? That what *Solomon* thought he had alone is now an attribute possest in partnership?

2 Chron. vi. 30.

Rev. ii. 23.

The religion of the old Testament, we see, took a great deal of care to speak of God with language that was us'd of no creature either in heaven or earth; and has the Gospel thrown down this enclosure? and put the Maker of all things upon a level with the work of his hands? 'tis said that *hell and destruction are before the Lord*; and of Christ, that *there is not any creature that is not manifest in his sight, for all things are naked and open to the eyes of* HIM *with whom we have to do.*

Pro. xv. 11. Heb. iv. 13.

But

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But to come to the other instance, our Lord's *not knowing the day of judgment.* That he confessed this is true enough; we understand it of his human nature, that he there spake as a man. Now the question is, whether there be any other places of Scripture upon which we may say, that he was possess'd of this secret? He tells the disciples that those *times and seasons* are *what the Father kept in his own power*; he would have them conceive of it as the grand reserve of the throne; and yet are we not to think and say the same of him who will ἰδίοις καιροῖς in *his own times shew who is the blessed and only potentate?*

Act. i. 7.

1 Tim. vi. 16.

Is not this frequently call'd *the day of Christ*? We read of *the day of the Lord* in which he is to be reveal'd. And the Scripture has in a promiscuous way us'd the words, calling it either the day of *the Lord*, or the day of *Christ*, both of which are to be understood of that day and hour that the Angels know not; so that really if we are not to look upon Christ as this Lord, and the proprietor of this great day, we could have wish'd that the holy Spirit had been more distinct. Compare but a few passages together.

2 *Thess.* ii. 1, 2. He had told them in the former chapter, that Christ Jesus was to be *reveal'd from heaven with* HIS *mighty Angels.* He uses this as a compellation, beseeching them *by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him*; and yet that he understands one of these sentences of his last coming is plain: for he bids them *not be shaken in mind, nor troubled, as that the day of Christ is at hand.* Had he meant a spiritual day, those greater affections of grace, and light, and love that we are waiting for, this could be no matter of trouble to them. But *the day of Christ* here is the same which *Peter* calls *the day of the Lord*, and shall come *as a thief in the night.* This is the

2 Pet. iii. 10.

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same comparison that our Saviour uses to one of the churches in *Asia, Behold I come as a thief.*

Rev. iii. 3.

Now is it not evident, that what one Apostle calls the day of Christ, and another the day of the Lord, is not to be understood of two days? And a man must be a great master of his own resolution, and grown to be evidence proof, if he says they are speaking of two Lords. I'm sensible some will indulge themselves to a secret boast, that this does not come up to an argument, that none denies Christ to be this Lord; but if you look down two verses farther, you will find that it is call'd *the day of* GOD; and the description is the very same, almost in a literal repetition, as if the holy Ghost had done it on purpose to confound the gainsayers of our day.

In the 10th verse we have this account of the day of Christ, that *the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements melt with fervent heat:* and no lower down than the 12th, we are said to be *looking for, and hasting to the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolv'd, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.* These passages are very near together, but we must not call them a vain repetition; 'tis not in vain to shew that the day of *Christ* is the day of *God*, and to let us see, that tho' this day is what none knew, no not the Son himself as man, though it is the time that the Father has reserved in his own power, yet we are to have such a consideration of Christ, as to call it *his day.* And surely the consequence is not very far fetch'd, that a day within his government must be a day within his notice. 'Tis *he in whom we have believed, and are persuaded that he is able to keep what we have committed to him against* THAT DAY.

2 Tim. i. 12.

It would have been robbery for him to be equal with God in this glory, if he was not so in nature.

To invade the Father's great reserve is against all our notions of his being a righteous servant, and his not coming to do his own will, if there was not another character that belong'd to him. We are sure that *he knows all things, and needs not that any man should ask him.* SERM. XLV. Joh. xvi. 30.

3. I pass on to another attribute of the divine nature, and that is omnipotence. There's nothing but what he does know, there's nothing but what he can do. *He has a mighty arm, strong is his hand, and high is his right hand.* Making the whole creation so well, doing it by his word, and upholding it by his providence, are publick arguments of an infinite Majesty. When he told *Job* out of the whirlwind the great things he had done in distributing heaven earth and sea to their several bounds, *Lord,* saith that good man, *I know that thou canst do every thing.* Ps. lxxxix. 13.

It's thus that he argues against the unbelief of his servants, *Is there any thing too hard for God?* He calls that sin by a name that shews it to be scandalous; 'tis a limiting the holy One of *Israel.* Our faith is *strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Abraham,* who is the great example of it upon record, reasons thus, *He accounted that what God had promised he was able to perform,* because he believed *before that God who raises the dead, and calls the things that are not as though they were.* I will go no farther into the vast field that the Scripture has given us, as a proof that God will be known by his Almighty power, but shall at once enter into the argument, that Rom. iv. 21.

These very things are said of Christ. *When I came,* saith he, *there was no man. Is my hand shorten'd at all, that it cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver? Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness, their fish stinks, because there is no water, and dies for thirst. I clothe the heavens* Isa. l. 2, 3, 4, 5.

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with blackneſs, and make ſackcloth their covering. That it is Chriſt who ſpeaks, you will be convinced by the next words. *The Lord God has given me the tongue of the learned, that I ſhould know how to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary: he wakens morning by morning, he wakens mine ear to hear as the learned: The Lord God has open'd mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that pluck'd off the hair, I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting.*

Thus he delivers himſelf in language ſuitable to both his natures. The whole glory of omnipotence is aſcrib'd to him. That we here read of him in a ſtate of weakneſs, as feeble and ſore broken by the diſquietneſs of his heart, cannot be denied. There was no room to call him Almighty, who was griev'd, and tir'd, and fainting, and crucify'd. He was executed in weakneſs as *to the body of his fleſh.* But let us enquire fairly, whether he who came of the ſeed of *David* is not over all God bleſſed for ever. Though we have the *book of the generations of Jeſus Chriſt*, who was the ſon of *David* and the ſon of *Abraham*; yet let us examine if the Scripture has not ſet him in ſuch a light, as that *none can declare his generation.*

You will ſee a chain of argument and adoration in the 40th chapter of *Iſaiah.* He begins with theſe words, *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, ſaith your God.* Here he ſpeaks, either of the *Jews*, or of believers, in every kindred, and tongue, and nation, as his people, and he is *their God.* The comfort they have is by his direction. *I create the fruits of the lips; peace, peace to him that is nigh, and to him that is far off, ſaith the Lord, and I will heal him.* Will they ever own themſelves to be the people of one that is not God? Or can they hear the thoughts of giving this name to one who is only ſubordi-

ch. lvii. 19.

nate? no, they had *none in heaven but him,* and none upon earth that they could desire besides him. And yet, SERM. XLV.

From this proclamation he passes into the great historical article of a believer's comfort, and that is the arrival of the Messiah. He describes the ministry of *John the Baptist,* as *the voice of one crying in the wilderness*; and what does he cry? does he use deceitful words that are not to be understood without a distinction, several hundred years after the prophet was dead? The thing itself that he delivers is this, *Prepare ye the way of the* LORD, *make strait in the desart a high way for our* GOD. Is not he, whom he calls *our God* in this verse, the same whom he had mention'd under the title of *your God* in the first? Thus did *Zechariah* apprehend the birth of his son. The Angel told him, that *many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the* LORD THEIR GOD, *and he shall go before him, i. e.* before the Lord their God, *in the spirit and power of Elias.* When *John* was born, the Spirit came upon his father; he was *fill'd with the holy Ghost,* and propheſied, *Thou child shalt be called the prophet of the* HIGHEST, *for thou shalt go before the face of the* LORD *to prepare* HIS *ways*; who is this that's call'd *the highest?* We have the word in another part of the same chapter, the Angel said to the Virgin *Mary, The power of the Highest shall come upon thee.* Now the question is, whether the word in one of these places signifies a Person that is not the highest? Will it not be as gross a contradiction as any you ever heard, to talk of a subordinate supreme, of One that is the highest, and yet has another infinitely above him?

Could the holy Spirit find no words when he was speaking of a creature, but such as confound our imaginations both of him and of the great God, that we cannot distinguish one from another?

SERM XLV. ther? The sense of the word *Most High* in the old Testament is so very plain, that we are in no temptation to fix it upon any but One: and 'tis the way to make us think the Gospel is *the snare that shall come upon all the earth*, if it has not set the same bounds to the Divine Nature that the law did to the ark. But, to return to the 40th of *Isaiah*.

The passage I have already given you refers to the coming of Christ, the entrance upon his own ministry. From that the Prophet goes on to the work of the Apostles, and those that should succeed 'em in the preaching of the Gospel: *O Zion,* ver. 9. *that bringest good tydings, get thee up into the high mountain: O Jerusalem, that bringest good tydings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid.* What is it they are to tell with so much courage and diffusion? *Say to the cities of Judah, Behold your* GOD. This is the third time we have the expression, He that comforted *Jerusalem* is *your God*, he whom *John the Baptist* prepar'd the way for is *our God*, and he is mention'd to the cities of *Judah* as *their God*. To them first, *God having rais'd up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless them: They were the children of the Prophets, and of the covenant made with Abraham*; and he is call'd *their God*.

From them this word sounded abroad to the ver. 10. ends of the earth, that this *Lord God will come with a strong hand, his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.* And lest any one should think that the Prophet had his thoughts got above a Redeemer, when he uses these expressions, he does without any pause descend into his more familiar character, that *he shall* ver. 11. *feed his flock like a shepherd, and gather the lambs with his arm, and carry 'em in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.*

Shall we lose a Saviour out of this verse, rather than admit him into the other? Will any deny

him

him to be our Shepherd, that he may not be own'd as our God? Is it not more desirable to keep what God has join'd together? Are we offended that he who gathers the lambs with his arm, should have an arm to rule for him? Shall we take pains to contract his majesty for the sake of his love, and argue that because he is a Shepherd, he cannot be a God? what a wilful thing is unbelief! SERM. XLV.

'Tis the same Person whom the Prophet goes on to speak of, that *he has measur'd the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heavens with a span, comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. It's he who sits upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grashoppers, that stretches out the heavens as a curtain, and spreads 'em as a tent to dwell in.* Can these words [it is HE] be understood of any but Him whom he had spoke of before? nay, let me add, what the Prophet does in the next words, and which you may refer to the enemies of his doctrine and Divinity: *They shall not be planted, they shall not be sown, yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth, and* HE *shall blow upon them.* And, ver. 12, 13.

Lest any should rush in upon the argument with the foolish talk, that he is a God by the donation and grant of one that was above him, he confounds the vain thought with this question, *To whom will ye liken me, or shall I be equal, saith the Holy One?* When he had spoke of him as a preacher of righteousness, as coming into the deserts of *Judah,* and there call'd him the Lord *our God;* when he had consider'd him as declar'd in the ministry of the Apostles, as one presented to the cities of *Judah* under the title of *their God;* when he proclaim'd him as the Lord of Providence, coming with his strong hand, he speaks of him as the great Creator: *Lift up your eyes on high, and*

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behold who has created these things, and brings out their hosts by number, HE *calls them all by names, by the greatness of his might, for that* HE *is strong in power, not one fails.* This is the very thing that the Psalmist enters among the perfections of God, that *he tells the number of the stars, and calls 'em all by their names.* And upon the whole, the Prophet makes this application, *Why saist thou, O Jacob, and speakest O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment passed over from my God?*

Ps. cxlvii. 4.

Can this be call'd a transition to any other than he had been speaking of quite thro' the chapter? no surely. With what does he encourage their faith in a Redeemer, but the same argument that the Apostle uses many ages after, *viz.* that our faith is *strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might? Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of his understanding?* Now lay all these things together, see whether the exposition is forc'd, and judge upon the whole, with what truth we are told, that Christ is call'd God only by a grant and participation from another, that we must not look upon him as the Supreme; that is, in one word, we are no better than heathens who do service to them that *by nature are no gods.* They may be call'd gods, as he is, and that's all. It will be said, that they have no pre-eminence conferr'd upon 'em; but, consider, their crime is not mistaking the deputed Deity, but supposing there is any at all: for, if he whom either we or they do worship is not a God by nature, the religion that's paid to him is idolatry.

From this Scripture that gives you an account of our Lord's omnipotence in the old Testament, I will lead you to another in the new: *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord,*

Rev. i. 8.

Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. The argument why the title of Almighty ſhould not be underſtood of the Son in this verſe, is becauſe it is join'd to thoſe characters that plainly belong to the Father in the fourth: *Grace be to you, and peace from him who was, and who is, and who is to come, and from Jeſus who is the faithful witneſs.* But I cannot think this a fair concluſion, becauſe the ſame title is undeniably given to the Son in the eleventh verſe, which has a nearer ſituation to the fifth than the fourth has. SERM. XLV.

The Apoſtle ſaith, *He heard behind him a great noiſe as of a trumpet, ſaying, I am Alpha and Omega, the firſt and the laſt.* Can we think he ſpeaks of the Father as the moſt high God, under ſuch a deſcription as would afterwards be claim'd by a creature? If one, who is not God, ſaith of himſelf, *I am Alpha and Omega, the firſt and the laſt, the beginning and the ending,* then theſe words which are ſuppos'd to be the diſtinction of the Deity do not anſwer the end.

Chriſt is uſually ſpoke of throughout the whole book; it's *his revelation* that he gave to his ſervant *John.* The Father is never brought in as ſpeaking; our Lord claims it to himſelf: *He that teſtifies theſe things ſaith, Behold I come quickly.* And who was this? you will find, firſt, by what he ſaith of himſelf, ver. 17. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the firſt and the laſt.* And then, by the reply the church makes to him, *Amen, even ſo come Lord Jeſus.* This book repreſents his government in the world, and therefore we muſt not dare to exclude him from thoſe praiſes: *We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and waſt, and art to come, becauſe thou haſt taken to thee thy great power, and reign'd.* Nor are theſe titles to be ſeparated, *Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, juſt and true are* ch. xxii. 20.

all

all thy ways, thou King of Saints. The voices of the multitude in the heaven, and the mighty thunderings are directed to him under this name, *The Lord God omnipotent reigneth.*

Feb. 14, 1719-20.

SERMON XLVI.

SERM. XLVI.

Numb. xxiii. 19. 1 Sam. xv. 29.

WE all along read of the great God, that his *truth* endures for ever: *He is not a man that he ſhould lye, nor the ſon of man that he ſhould repent. The ſtrength of Iſrael will not lye or repent, for he is not a man that he ſhould repent.* I need not lead you into a great number of Scriptures that give a teſtimony to this perfection in the Supreme Nature. Both the old and new Teſtament are crowded with 'em; he that runs may read. What I ſhall fix upon under this head, you will have in theſe two particulars. *Firſt*, That eternal truth conveys to us the notion that we ought to entertain of God. 'Tis thus we are to think of him. And *Secondly*, That this attribute with equal fulneſs of words, with the ſame undiſtinguiſh'd phraſe comes in among the characters of Chriſt Jeſus: *In his Majeſty he rides proſperouſly becauſe of truth; he loves righteouſneſs, and hates wickedneſs. His mouth ſhall ſpeak truth, wickedneſs is an abomination to his lips, all the words of his mouth are in righteouſneſs.*

Pſ. xlv. 4, 7.

Pro. viii. 7, 8.

The former of theſe is what the enemies of our Lord do rather chooſe to ſtick at than the latter; and

and give their argument this turn, that it's possible a Person may have all that's affirm'd of Christ as to his truth and integrity, and yet be no more than a creature. They that are with him in heaven, are *true and faithful*, and this title ought to comprehend all the churches upon earth. 'Tis the imperfection and scandal of our societies, that men *speak lies in hypocrisie*; and it will be a happy, tho' a very severe reformation, when *the remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor tell lies, nor suffer a deceitful tongue to be found in their mouths.* Whether such a purifying of the sons of *Levi* happens in our day or no, yet we hope our next look, and our next remove will be to a place where *nothing enters that defiles or works abomination, or loves and makes a lye.* All the armies that follow the Lamb *are called, and faithful, and chosen.* The hundred forty and four thousand that attend him upon Mount *Sion* are not only distinguish'd by his Father's name in their foreheads, but by something that lies more within: *They are without guile before the throne of God.*

Rev. xxii. 27.

xiv. 6.

Thus much then we must own, that the mere character of truth is so far from being peculiar to God, that it ought to belong to every creature, and will be found in the general assembly and church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven. But I do not see how that's any defence against the argument I am upon; for tho' truth is one of the communicable perfections, and what God imparts among the works of his own hands, yet it's plain, with an evidence above that of the sun at noon day, that under this head he speaks of himself. And therefore if the word can signifie no more than what may be affirm'd of a creature, 'tis wrong plac'd among the names of the Deity.

To

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To what purpose does *Moses* leave the *Jews* a song for their anniversary devotion, in which he introduces the titles of his God with great solemnity? *Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak, and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth, because I will publish the name of the Lord, ascribe ye greatness to our God.* Would not any one expect, after such an alarm to heaven and earth, that what he calls *the name of the Lord* is to be understood of something above all the shares that man can have in it? and yet he saith no more than what may be affirm'd of every Saint in heaven, according to the methods of interpretation that are us'd when any thing is said of Christ: *He is a rock, and his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment, a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he.* It is evident that the character of truth in which he ascribes greatness to the Lord must be number'd among the perfections of the Divine Nature.

Deu. xxxii. 1, 2.

ver. 4.

Jer. x. 10.

We read of him elsewhere, that he is *the true God, and the everlasting King. Nebuchadnezzar*, when he issu'd his proclamation, that all nations should honour the King of heaven, gives this reason for it, because *all his works are truth, and his ways judgment.* Thus was he ador'd in the faith of his people. *Abraham* therefore believed, but it was *before him who quickens the dead, and calls the things that are not, as tho' they were.* And *against hope, he believed in hope*, judging him *faithful who had promised.* This was *giving glory to God*, which is a name that the action could never bear, if it did not signifie a dependence upon him for that which no other has, and a confidence in him that we dare not place upon the best and highest of all creatures.

Dan. iv. 37.

Rom. iv. 17, 18, 19, 20.

Now 'tis thus that the Scripture has spoke of Christ Jesus, and left us no directions to read his character with a draw-back. I need not be afraid

to

to say the same things of him that I do of the Father, when the holy Spirit has done so before me. If I find the names given with an equality, I must endeavour to preserve it, however inconceivable it may be to a corrupt and a contracted mind. Thus SERM. XLVI.

When Christ tells us, he is *the way, the truth, and the life*, I cannot but imagine, though in those words he declares himself to be a Mediator, yet there is something in them that carries our thoughts a great deal farther. He is the way, because *no man comes to the Father but by him*; that name plainly signifies his office. But how is he the *truth?* Not merely as *grace and truth came by him*; not because he published it to the world, for then all faithful ministers may be call'd the truth. Certainly as calling our selves the truth and the life, because we make a declaration of both would be too much for us, so such an interpretation of the words is too little for him. Joh. xiv. 6.

If he is not equal to the Father, would it not have been better, more modest in him, and more secure for his people, had he not us'd a word with so much freedom, by which the great God has so often revealed himself? Is it not an unhappy snare to his disciples, and all the ages of his people, to tell them, that as *they believe in God*, he would have them also *believe in him*; and immediately after such an exhortation, speak of himself as the Scripture has always spoke of God? As he had claim'd an equal faith he lays hold on an equal title. The distinction that we make in the sense of these expressions can never be safe unless we had an easy direction to it in the words themselves. Joh. xiv. 1.

How well did he keep his distance in that prayer, *Father, let this cup pass from me, yet not as I will, but as thou wilt*? Any one may see that he is there to be consider'd as an inferior to the Father; and what

SERM. XLVI. what a small matter in other places would have prevented any persons saying that they are equal? Could he not have hinted to his disciples, that he call'd for no more than a subordinate faith to a subordinate God? That though he bid them believe in him as they believ'd in God, yet he meant it only in a lower way? And though he is *the truth and the life*, yet he is not the fountain of life?

Did not he know how mankind are apt to worship and glorify the creature as they do the Creator; and is it likely he would have given the directions so loose and unguarded as he has done, and instead of opening the difference between himself and the most High, leave the matter more entangled and obscure? *If ye had known me*, saith he, *ye should have known my Father also, and henceforth ye have both known him and seen him. He that has seen me has seen the Father; I am in the Father and the Father in me.* Who could imagine that the Scripture had the least design to encourage the thoughts of a distinction in nature between the Father and the Son, when every divine title is given to them in common?

Joh. xiv. 7, 9, 10.

What? have we never a peculiar name for our God in all his book? Has he no words that belong to himself? Is there an infinite difference between him and the Mediator with respect to his being and perfection, and has the holy Spirit found out no expressions to shew it? 'Tis his work to *glorify Christ*, and how does he do it, but in the way that our Lord has inform'd us of? *He shall take of mine and shew it unto you.* What's that? *All that the Father has are mine, therefore*, with reference to that fulness of the Deity, *I said, he shall take of mine and shew it unto you.*

Joh. xvi. 14, 15.

I can easily accommodate that title to Christ in his lower nature, that he is *the faithful witness*; but methinks it sounds a great deal more in other places. *These things saith he that is holy, and he that*

Rev. i. 5. ch. iii. 7.

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is true, he that has the key of David, who opens and none can shut, and shuts when none can open. So again, *These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness.* Can we go any higher in speaking of him whose *mercy is above the heavens, and his truth reaches to the clouds?* SERM. XLVI. ver. 14. Ps. xxxvi. 5.

When we say, *Who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?* Would not any one think it was an adoration, that it could not be given to a creature without falshood and blasphemy? And yet this is the song of the Lamb, *Just and true are all thy ways, thou King of Saints.* He that sits upon the white horse is called *faithful and true, in righteousness does he judge and make war* Who is this? *He is clothed with a vesture dipp'd in blood, and his name is call'd the Word of God.* We read of a salvation *in Christ Jesus,* and then it's added, *If we deny him, he will also deny us; he abides faithful he cannot deny himself.* 'Tis just the same that is said of God, that *he cannot lie.* lxxxix. 8. Rev. xv. 3. xvi. 11, 13. 2 Tim. ii. 13. Tit. i. 2.

The religion of the heathen taught the doctrine of a supreme and subordinate God better than ours does. The titles they gave, the devotions they offer'd were plainly distinguish'd. They spake one way of him whom they reckon'd to be *Pater hominumq; deûmq;* Father of men and of gods, and with more diminution of their inferior deities. But our Bible is a mere heap of confusion according to the *Arian* argument. We have an account of the supreme God, who, they say, is no other than the person of the Father. We are also led to consider the Son as infinitely below him, and yet there is not one title, attribute, or glory mentioned of the former, but what is equally given to the later. Were ever people so unhappy as Christians are? We must make a distinction, and yet the book we go by has not taught us how to express it. Thus *the Son of God is come and has given us an understanding* 1 Joh. v. 20.

SERM. XLVI.

understanding that we may know him that is true. Yet he saith the same of himself that he does of the Father; for *we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ, this is the true God, and this is eternal life.*

5. Holiness and goodness are other attributes of the Divine Nature, and proper characters under which we are to conceive of a God. The objection that this is liable to is the same with what we have clear'd off under the former head; the same answer will do, that tho' these are qualifications found among creatures, yet there is a sense that limits them to the Divine Nature.

The great God is so holy and good as no other being ever was, or ever will be. *There is none holy as the Lord, for there is none besides thee.* We delighted in that name, *the holy One of Israel. Thou art holy*, saith Christ himself, *O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.* In the days of his flesh he renounc'd this title as a man, *Why callest thou me good? there's none good but one, that is God.* Certainly there was no harm in calling him *good master*; 'tis a name that we may lawfully use to any serious person, especially one who teaches the way of God in truth: but our Lord would tell the young man, that goodness was a divine attribute, and is among the titles that belong to God.

1 Sam. ii. 2. Psal. xxii. 3. Matt. xix. 17.

Now examine whether the Scripture has set any bounds to this in the account that we have of Christ Jesus. 'Tis a doctrine that the devils own'd, *I know thee who thou art, the holy One of God.* This is above the scorn of a prophane wit, for as the Apostle says, *If thou believest there is one God, thou dost well, the devils also believe and tremble.* But besides, it is what the Angel said, *That holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.* This is more than could be said of *John the Baptist*, though he was to be *fill'd with the holy Ghost from*

Luk. i. 35.

from his mother's womb. But antecedent to Christ's sanctification as a man, he is call'd *the holy thing*, because the holy Ghost would overshadow his mother, and the power of the highest come upon her, which are words that confound us; they strike our minds with an awe, for they are all the description we shall ever have of a thing we shall never know. Thus do they speak of him, *Against thy holy child Jesus have they taken counsel*, and——*let signs and wonders be done in the name of thy holy child Jesus.* SERM. XLVI. Act. iv. 27; 30.

Certainly this account signifies a great deal more than the purity of the human nature; for it was not *that* that the people of *Israel* appeared against, but his pretensions to the divine. It was not *that* in the name of which he desir'd signs and wonders to be wrought. *Ananias* tells *Saul, The God of our fathers has chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and hear the voice of his mouth.* 'Tis the same title that *Peter* had us'd before to the *Jews*. Ye denied the *holy One, and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted to you.* You may indeed pull down these majestick names, and make them signify no more than they would have done, had they been given to a creature. But will not a common reader be amaz'd when you tell him, that the holy Spirit who *speaks* here as he us'd to do of a God, does not *mean* one? Acts xxii. 14. ch. iii. 14.

Let us enquire into the adorations of heaven, *Behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and one sat on the throne; he that sat was to look upon like a jasper, and a sardine stone.* Let any one now tell me, whether it is most proper to understand this of a God manifest in the flesh, or of *the Father whom no man has seen or can see?* You read afterwards of *four beasts*, which might have been translated more decently as it is in the prophecy of *Ezekiel, four living creatures.* It is said of them, that *they rest not day nor* Rev. iv. 2; ver. 8, 9, 10, 11.

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nor night, saying, holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come; and they give thanks to him who sits on the throne, and lives for ever and ever, saying, thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created.

Is there any thing in this, which the Scripture has not in other places given to Jesus Christ? We often read of him, that *he was, he is, and he is to come*; and tho' some will tell us, that it is too much to call him Lord God Almighty, yet *Thomas* could say, *My Lord, and my God.* And we know, that
xxi. 5. *he sits upon the throne, and makes all things new.* And
Col. i. 16, 17. he has created all things, *By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, dominions, principalities or powers; all things are created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.* And

Whether we have any ground to say, that the Angels give him the repeated adorations of *holy, holy, holy*, let us enquire into the Scriptures. The most remarkable place, where we meet with that abounding manner of praise, cannot be understood of any other besides him. It is *Isa.* vi. 1. *The Lord sat upon a throne high and lifted up, and his train fill'd the temple. Above it stood the Seraphims, and one cried unto another, saying, holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.* His train filling the temple, and the whole earth being full of his glory, are plain intimations to whom these titles belong. When the prophet saw *the King, the Lord of hosts*, we think it most likely that he meant that King who should be born to *David;* nor was the retinue and pomp with which he appeared too much for the *Messiah*, for he had Angels always to attend him, both out of heaven and into it; both at his birth when he took our nature on, and at his ascension when he took it up. But

But we are not left to guess and suppose, and beg our way into an interpretation. The holy Ghost himself is our expositor; the Evangelist *John* tells us, *These things said Esaias when he saw his glory and spake of him.* Saw whose glory? His whom the *Pharisees* would not confess though they did believe him, *lest they should be put out of the synagogue.* Excommunication was to them more dreadful than infidelity. Was it the Father whom they were thus afraid of owning? No certainly, every one knows who it is they would not confess, and this is the very person whom *Esaias* spake of; and at the time he did it, he *saw his glory*; the Angels appear'd to be employ'd in such a manner as they never us'd to any but the great God, crying, *holy, holy, holy.* Joh. xii. 41.

Can't they worship a God either in earth or in heaven with titles that are incommunicable? It was a crime in Lucifer to set his throne as the throne of God, and to be *like the most high:* and will our blessed Saviour suffer his people to approach him as if he thought it no robbery to be equal with God, when it certainly must be the vilest of all robberies? Are we by the direction of the Scripture to speak to him in such a manner, that we cannot possibly outdo it or go beyond it in our applications to the Father? Has he not only the same titles, but the same repetitions of them? How proper would it have been for him to check the Angels as he did the young man in the Gospel, "*Why call ye* "*me holy*, there is none holy as the Lord, for there "is none besides him? Don't confound your re- "spect to me with the language of that religion "that is only owing to him." Had any such caution as this been revealed, it might have instructed two worlds at once. But let Angels and men go on in their old way, *honouring the Son even as they honour the Father*; and though some among us

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call it idolatry, as indeed it is, if he's a creature, yet we see it obtains in the temple above, which has *no fellowship with idols.*

Some vain men give us distinctions that shew the authors to be *puffed up in their fleshly minds, and intruding into things which they have not seen.* We know no more of heaven than what is told us in the Bible, and that has made no difference between the praises, the blessing, the power and glory that are given to him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever. And *who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?* From whence are people instructed to tell us, that these adorations are *chiefly* given to him that sits on the throne, and only in *a lower degree* to the Lamb? Those persons know nothing what worship means, who suppose it is to be directed in different degrees to different objects.

We are to worship none but God, nor is any part of our homage to be withheld from him, as a sort of second service to another. You must *love the Lord your God with all your hearts, with all your minds, with all your strength, and with all your soul;* not merely with the chief of these powers and affections, *and him only should you serve.* The love we have for men and Angels, and the worship we are said to pay them, is not of the same kind with that we give to God, nor has it the least degree of religious adoration in it. Our worship, taking it for an act of devotion, is not given to the highest Angel, nay, not to the Son himself in our nature, but merely as he is God; and therefore this distinction teaches to talk about worship in the way that the Scripture abominates.

I have again exceeded my own design by an enlargment that swells and grows upon me. I had thought to have gone through the other characters that belong to the divine nature, but that I could

not

not without ſliding faſter over theſe things than is agreeable to the importance of the ſubject. And I hope none will think diſcourſes of Chriſt Jeſus too long. This doctrine being the riches of heaven, what Angels deſire to look into, may juſtly be the perfume of our aſſemblies on earth, for *his name is as ointment poured forth.* SERM. XLVI.

SERMON XLVII.

Feb. 28. 1719-20.

6. ANOTHER glory of the divine nature, and under which we are taught to conceive of God, is the *eternity* of his being. *He is the King eternal, immortal, inviſible; he only has immortality.* 'Tis in vain for any to ſhun the argument, by telling us, that the terms of everlaſting, and being for ever, and ſeveral others of the like ſound, are often to be taken in a limited ſenſe. Thus the covenant of God with the *Jews* is ſaid to be *for ever*; their poſſeſſion of *Canaan*, their ceremonial worſhip are mention'd under theſe majeſtick words, and yet we know that the former is diſſolv'd by the wrath of providence, and the latter by the light of the Goſpel. This is all true, but not to the purpoſe of thoſe that urge it; for the queſtion is not, whether ſome things that are called eternal were not at laſt to periſh, but whether or no there is not ſuch a meaning in thoſe titles as can be applied to none but the moſt high God. 1 Tim. i. 17. —vi. 16.

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You know we always distinguish between a two-fold eternity; by one we mean that which had no beginning, by the other that which has no end. The title in the latter sense is given to a vast multitude of persons and things. Angels and the souls of men are created for an unchangeable duration. We also read of an *everlasting righteousness*, because it shall be ever pleaded in heaven, and *an everlasting covenant* which shall maintain its character and virtue when the visible creation is all gone. Under this head we may bring in the *eternal life*, that contains and supplies the happiness of God's people; and that house not made with hands is *eternal in the heavens*, where they are to enjoy it, and shall be *ever with the Lord.* Nay it's as true, that the torment of those who shall be condemn'd is *for ever and ever*, the wicked are to go into *everlasting punishment*; as they dwell with devouring fire, so it is with *everlasting burnings.* These and several other particulars are distinguish'd in the Scriptures from the visible world, for *the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal.*

2 Cor. v. 2.
1 Thess. v. ult.
Matt. xxv. 26.
Isa. xxxiii. 14.
2 Cor. iv. 18.

But none of these are comprehended in the full and proper sense of the word eternity; that is, tho' they are to have no end, yet every one of them had a beginning: Once they were not, and it is by the appointment of another that they both are and shall be.

This complete eternity, as we may call it, is peculiar to God, and we speak both *of* him and *to* him in those terms that can be us'd of no creature, when we say *from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.* That which always had an existence can be no other than the supreme being. Both the light of nature, and the revelation of Scripture give us this as an unconteſtible truth, *that ye may know and believe me, and understand, that I am he, before me there*

Psal. xc. 2.
Isa. xliii. 10.

there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me, I, even I am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour. So again, upon this head he exposes the folly of idolaters, *Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from antient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.* Here he proclaims an existence which was alone with himself, and he mentions that as the foundation of his independent counsels. xlvi. 9, 10.

'Twould be a fraudulent usage of this, and the like places, to assault them in the way that's taken with several others, and tell us, that these words *in the beginning* do not signify any thing that had no beginning; for either the holy Ghost has in such phrases given us the eternity of God, or he has not mention'd it at all, and so has left us nothing about that which is the first principle in nature. When we read of an *eternal purpose*, that he had in himself before the world was, 'tis not to be debas'd and plunder'd; we are to look upon it as a resolution taken, not only before our world was made, but laid in the mind of him who had all being within himself.

Here let us enquire whether this is not a glory that the holy Scripture has given to Christ Jesus in language that's easy enough to be understood. We read of *Melchizedek* as a Type of him, that he had *neither beginning of days nor end of life; but made like the Son of God, abides a priest continually.* What the Bible tells us of the Son's eternity is liable to no other objection than may as well be brought against the Father's. Does not the Psalmist write of the most high God? Does he not declare the name of the Lord, of *Jehovah, when the people are gathered together and the kingdoms to serve the Lord?* He says, *O my God, thy years are* Heb. vii. 3. Psal. cii. 21,—27.

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throughout all generations; of old thou hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thine hands; they shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea all of them shall wax old as a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years have no end. This is with very little alteration of the words applied to Christ, *Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thine hands; they shall perish but thou remainest, and they shall all wax old as does a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed, but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.*

Heb. i. 10, 11, 12.

John i. 1, 2. We read that *in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: The same was in the beginning with God.* The *Socinian* interpretation of that passage was this, that in the beginning of the Gospel Jesus Christ was, he was then with God, *i. e.* employ'd by him; and he was God by donation and appointment to the office of Mediator. They believed no more of him than the persons did who crucify'd him, that *he was a man approved of God by miracles, wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of the Jews, as they themselves also knew.*

Acts ii. 22.

But though the word of the Lord is for ever, yet errors grow old, and the opinions of men who have rose up against a divine revelation change and vary with the humours of Ages. This exposition is now as much decry'd by those who will not allow the Divinity of Christ, as it is by those that maintain it; and so it will fare with *their* opinion as much as it is now in vogue, with a few years gray hairs will appear here and there upon it. It will be no longer admir'd than whilst it's a *new scheme*, and as time itself shall eat out that character, so *that which decays and grows old is ready to vanish away.* Whilst

the truth of God is ſtill the ſame, like a rock in the ſea, tho' it's daſh'd with waves of all ſorts, and bruſh'd with winds from all quarters, yet it remains unmov'd. The oppoſition that's made to it varies juſt as Satan finds it needful to change hands, but the doctrine itſelf is ſtill the ſame that it ever was, and ever will be. SERM. XLVII.

We have no other term of communion or ground of Chriſtian concord than every generation of God's people had before us. This was the only *unity of the Spirit*, and the only *bond of peace* ſeventeen hundred years ago. *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have ſeen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life; for the life was manifeſt and we have ſeen it and bear witneſs, and ſhew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifeſted to us.* What he calls eternal life, is to be underſtood of a Perſon, and not of a thing, of one who was *manifeſt*, whom they ſaw with their eyes, whom they look'd upon, and their hands handled, which cannot without a violence upon language be applied to the future glory; becauſe that is not ſeen, for it *does not appear what we ſhall be.* He here ſpeaks of one who was born in time. *The life*, as he ſaith, was manifeſt, and we have ſeen it, and bear witneſs; but then antecedent, to ſuch a diſcovery, this eternal life was *with the Father.* As in his Goſpel he call'd him *the word*, ſo here he calls him *the life*, and upon the preaching of this doctrine were all their ſocieties founded; as he goes on to tell them, *that which we have ſeen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye alſo may have fellowſhip with us.* A fellowſhip without ſuch a declaration is what the beloved diſciple knew nothing of; and the reaſon is plain, becauſe it was *a fellowſhip with the Father and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt.* And it's only *if we walk in the light as he is in the light, that we can have fellowſhip with one another.* The

1 Joh. i. 1, 2, 3.

ver. 7.

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The objection that's brought againſt this teſtimony is like a ſword in a mad man's hand, that cuts his own fleſh; it ſtrikes as much at the error they maintain, as it does at the truth they oppoſe. We are told that theſe words *in the beginning was the word* do not prove the eternity of a perſon any more than the firſt verſe in *Geneſis* proves the eternity of the creation, when it's ſaid, *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*, and that the expreſſion in both places muſt take its ſenſe and force from the things that are ſpoken of. In one *Moſes* gives us an account of the world, in the other the Evangeliſt writes of the Goſpel.

This may be pleaded by a *Socinian*, but it comes ill from the mouth of an *Arian*; for theſe do own that the Son of God had an exiſtence before all worlds, and they bring this very Scripture to prove it. Now if the words do refer to a being that he had before his incarnation, they may with as much propriety ſignify the ſame that they do when applied to a God; and if his being with God may be underſtood of a Perſon that is limited and deriv'd, I cannot ſee why an Atheiſt may not take the ſame liberty with the Phraſe when it is ſpoke of the Father, that others do when it gives us an account of the Son; for we are expreſly told, that *all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made; in him was life, and the life was the light of men.*

Conſider what the Apoſtle tells us, *Jeſus Chriſt is the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever.* Compare this with what we are told of *the Father of lights, that with him there is no variableneſs, nor ſhadow of turning.* We are directed to be as clear and fix'd as poſſible in this article by the following words, *Be not carried about with divers and ſtrange doctrines.* 'Tis the ſame expreſſion that another writer uſes,

Heb. xiii. 8.

Jam. i. 17.

when he describes those who are departed from the faith, they are *clouds without water, carried about of winds.* These doctrines that are *divers* from one another, and *strange* to the people of God, we are to keep our ground against; and you will judge what they are by their opposition to that great truth he had laid down before. *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever.* If this is applied to the human nature the proposition is false, for that submitted to great variations, he was dead and is alive; and if you refer it to his mediation, that also is not unchangeable; for there is a time when the Son himself shall be subject, *i. e.* declared in a most publick manner to be so, and shall then *give up the kingdom to the Father, that God may be all, and in all.*

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The kingdom that the Apostle there speaks of cannot be the same with what the Angel mentions to the Virgin *Mary, He shall rule over the house of Jacob for ever and ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.* In one place the kingdom is to be given up, and in the other, there's to be no end of the kingdom; with respect to the former, Jesus is *not* the same yesterday, to day, and for ever; and therefore if we are not to conceive of him in a character higher than his mediation, these Scriptures cannot be own'd with truth; for to say that his being the same for ever may signify that he continues for ever some way or other, is trifling both with words and things; or to say, that *for ever* signifies a long time, to the end of the visible creation, is such an insult both upon language and the mystery it belongs to, as proclaims a man to be void of fear; such foolish and unlearned questions only gender strifes. Suppose I should say of the Father of lights, who is without any variableness or shadow of turning, that he is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever, would not all mankind take the

Luk. i. 33.

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the terms to be equivalent? or can any exceptions be made to the latter, that would not have the same force against the former?

When an author tells us, as he that writes against Mr. *Trosse*'s arguments does, that Christ cannot be unchangeable, because he was born, he died, he rose again, and went to heaven, does not such a one virtually say, this Scripture is to be ras'd out. May we not plead as much against his being the same for ever, as against his being without any variableness? Indeed if there was any pretence for using this text as they do that 1 *Joh.* v. 7. it would have diverted the dispute, and then we must not have argued about the *meaning*, but the *authority* of a single verse; not what it said, but whence it came, just as a man who cannot answer the charge of an indictment demurs to the jurisdiction of the court. This confronting of copies is much easier work than answering of reasons; but here's a text in full force, we find it in a chapter that's ungarbled, and what shall we do with that?

Nay, to this I may add a multitude of other places. Thus Christ tells us himself under the title of wisdom, that *the Lord possest him in the beginning of his ways before his works of old, he was set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was; when there was no depth, he was brought forth.* I am sensible that these expressions of *being set up*, and *brought forth*, will be catch'd at as an abatement to the truth that I am contending for; but I will leave you to consider what the criticism would end in, if it was applied to another text that I have already given you, which certainly stands for a declaration of God's eternity. That *Isa.* xliii. *Before me there was no God form'd, neither shall there be after me.* Suppose we should use this phrase, *the forming of a God*, as they do the other, I believe you would tremble at the gross produce of such an argument.

Prov. viii. 22, 23, 24.

Again

Again you read, *Out of Bethlehem Ephratah he shall come forth to me, that is to be a ruler in Israel.* This is easily to be understood of a natural birth, and a spiritual kingdom. But then it is said of him who is thus to be born, that *his goings forth have been of old from everlasting.* Some late authors are impatient when we distinguish between two natures in the Person of Christ Jesus, tho' you often read of him thus, in one and the same verse: His *coming* out of *Bethlehem* cannot be that *going forth* that is mention'd afterwards; nor would a King that was then future be said to be *of old,* and from everlasting. SERM. XLVII. Mic. v. 2.

If it is objected that the word *from everlasting* does not always signifie a proper eternity, I believe it may be sooner said than prov'd. And till I meet with a passage in Scripture, where that which had a beginning is said to be *from everlasting,* I must take that opinion to be no more than the storm of a terrible one, which, for all its sound, is only a blast against a wall. I durst no more set bounds to that expression, *His goings forth have been from everlasting,* than to the other, *From everlasting to everlasting thou art God.* I'm not one of those that pretend to *declare his generation.* The Spirit who *searches the deep things of God* has given us the titles of Father and Son in the same language; and I am sure, that the spirits who tell us of a distinction between 'em, and will adjust the value of words, have made no such searches as these are. Let us therefore speak as those who have receiv'd *not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God.* 1 Cor. ii. 12.

7. The great God takes pleasure to be known as the chief agent in all the works of nature and grace: *Of him, and thro' him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever, Amen.* Thus the harmonious Rom. xi. 36.

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harmonious inhabitants of heaven are ſinging to him, *Thou haſt created all things, and for thy pleaſure they are and were created.* And believers upon earth can ſay, *Our God is the God of ſalvation, in his hand are the deep places of the earth, the ſtrength of the hills is his alſo: the ſea is his, and he made it, and his hands have form'd the dry land. O come, let us worſhip and bow down, and kneel before the Lord our maker, for he is our God, and we are the people of his paſture, and the ſheep of his hand.*

Rev. iv. 11.

Pſ. lxviii. xcv. 4, 5, 6, 7.

To ſuppoſe that the Moſt High made the Son to be an agent in the creation, and the Spirit to have the management of our redemption, and that the Divine Nature was not *immediately* employ'd in either, is a ſcheme that I ſhall take in pieces in the next diſcourſe, and let you ſee that it is diſhonourable to the Father, as well as to the Son and Spirit, and brings in the old *Heathen* notion of an unactive God, only froth'd up with the nonſenſe of two omnipotent creatures. Such folly as this muſt never be charg'd upon the holy Scriptures; 'tis indeed talking without book, I'm ſure, without *that book.* At preſent I will confine myſelf to the point that I gave you in laying down the head, that it is the character of the Deity to be *chief agent* both in nature and grace. God has always mention'd this as his peculiar: *The heavens are the work of his hands, the moon and the ſtars he has ordain'd.* We can go no higher in our notions of him, than that it is he *for whom are all things, and by whom are all things.* They are for him as the great end, and by him as the chief cauſe. Now,

Heb. ii. 10.

Col. i. 16.

It is ſaid of the Son, that *all things are created by him and for him.* What's the difference between theſe two texts? Why muſt *by him* in one place ſignifie only an inſtrument, and in the other a ſupreme agent? And why muſt *for him* in one Scripture declare a ſubordinate, and in the other an ultimate

ultimate end? If God had design'd this distinction for the use of his churches, he could easily have given it. I'm sure, they that talk against the use of human words in divine things, are forc'd to contradict themselves; for without the barbarous terms of a *subordinate Deity*, a deriv'd, independent, and *originated Godhead*, 'tis impossible to drive in their notion. There must be a great noise of axes and hammers in the building of their temple, much *lifting up* of those *tools* that pollute God's altar. If these are not words that man's wisdom teaches, I know not what is, confounding us with *philosophy and vain deceit, after the rudiments of the world, after the traditions of men, and not after Christ.* SERM. XLVII. Col. ii. 8.

Supposing we were to have a catechism in Scripture-language, which that party have so long demanded, what would they get by it? Is it not easie to drive 'em out of these beloved measures? as for example, if the first question is this, what's your opinion of the great God? you cannot answer better, than that it is *He for whom are all things, and by whom are all things.*: or, that *he has created all things, and for his pleasure they are and were created.* If the next question be, who is that Jesus *in whom we have redemption in his blood, the forgiveness of our sins?* The Scripture has taught us to say, that *it is he by whom all things are created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things are created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.* And does not such a text teach us to answer the question we find in another, *Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary: there is no searching of his understanding?* If you should ask again, who is our God? we cannot answer in better words, than Col. i. 16, 17. Isa. xl. 28.

that

SERM. XLVII. that *our God is the God of salvation:* And if you follow this with another question, Who is that Jesus whom we look to? you may say, *the author and finisher of your faith,* or, *the author of eternal salvation to as many as obey him, neither was there salvation in any other.*

Is it by any human decision, or remote and uncertain consequences, do we depart from express words of Scripture, when we say that Christ is equal with God, in the works of nature and grace? Say we these things as men, or saith the Gospel the same also? what? shall a God be known to be the God of salvation, and shall a creature Heb. v. 7. be *the author of that salvation?* Shall they in heaven adore the great God for his having created all things, and shall the things they admire him for be the work of another? When will vain words have an end, or how long will they darken the counsels of God by words without knowledge?

If they tell us that God created these things both in nature and in grace *by Christ* as his instrument, why should that instrument take to himself the glory of a chief agent, and speak of his own performance in royal language, in the same words that are us'd by the Supreme Efficient? *Shall the ax boast itself against him that hews therewith, or shall the saw magnifie itself against him that shakes it?* Must there be any room for such a complaint in the laying of our salvation? What care did our blessed Saviour take to talk like one who came down into a lower nature? When he speaks as man, he tells us plainly, that *the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do.*

And why should not all the account we have of him be thus guarded? for, when he saith, *My Father works hitherto, and I work:* that *he gives eternal life,* that we know that eternal life is the gift of God: that he is *the author of faith,* tho' faith is *the operation*

tion of God: that he is *the Finisher of it,* tho' he *that has wrought us for the self-same thing is God:* that he *gives life, and gives it more abundantly,* tho' it is *God* who works in us both to will and to do. How is it possible that these Scriptures should be match'd to one another, without supposing an equality between the Father and the Son? *There's one God and Father of all, who is above all, and thro' all, and in us all.* And yet Christ is *over all, God blessed for ever,* and *Christ lives in us.* Christ is in us as *our hope of glory.* SERM. XLVII. Joh. x. 10. Phil. ii. 13. Eph. iv. 6. Gal. ii. 20.

We must deny these things to be peculiar to the Deity, tho' they are always represented so, if One, who by nature is no God, can be capable of doing 'em. There's no need to say with *David, Among the gods there's none like unto thee, O Lord, neither are there any works like unto thy works.* For, here's one like to him, with a nature infinitely below him, and there are works like his works. The very greatest and best works that ever God has done, Creation, Providence, and Redemption are ascrib'd to one who is not his equal. So that tho' God does not give his glory to another, yet according to the new scheme *we* must give that glory to another. We are told of *the God of all grace, who has call'd us to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus,* that he will *make us perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle us.* Now this is no more than that *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ should be with us,* for *he is of power to stablish us.* Ps. lxxxvi. 8. 1 Pet. v. 10. Rom. xvi. 24.

8. The last thing that I shall observe in the character of a God is, that he has a right to the homage of all his creatures. All things are made *for him* that were made by him; and especially in that business that is call'd *religion,* 'tis all directed to him. *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* The laws of devotion he has distributed among Angels and Saints. When Mat. iv. 10.

SERM. XLVII. theſe come into the ſame place, they ſhall with the greateſt perfection of their natures be employ'd in the ſame work. And tho' we do not act as we ſhall do in heaven, yet we have but one object of our reverence and godly fear. There's none in heaven whom we have but him, and none upon earth whom we deſire beſides him. *Hear, O Iſrael,* ſaith he in the opening of his law, *the Lord our God is one Lord.* He puts this in the front of his commandments, *Thou ſhalt have no other gods before me: thou ſhalt not bow down thyſelf unto 'em, nor ſerve 'em, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God.* Now,

Deu. vi. 4.

The greater that Deity is, that we make to ourſelves, the more it engages his jealouſie. We cannot better account for it, to worſhip an Angel than an ox that eateth graſs; but the former will be more reſented by a jealous God, than the latter. And if the Son and Spirit are but creatures, our adoration of them is ſtill more provoking to the Divine jealouſie. The greater the rival is, the worſe muſt our error be that makes him ſo.

But has the moſt high God expreſs'd himſelf with any fear, that we ſhould exceed in our homage to the Son and Spirit? Are we ſo guarded, contracted, and held in upon our Devotions to them as we are to the Angels? Have either of theſe Perſons in the eternal Trinity ſaid to any of us, *See thou do it not, but worſhip thou God?* no, we find that our bleſſed Saviour, who blam'd the young man that knew not his Divinity for falling down before him, takes all the connected praiſes that are given him both in heaven and earth. He ſits in the temple of God, and gives out himſelf to be God. And this would be as bad in him, if he was only a repreſentative Deity, as it is in the man of ſin, who calls himſelf a repreſentative Saviour. He has ſet his throne as the Moſt High.

Sometimes

Sometimes you have him that ſits on the throne diſtinguiſh'd from the Lamb in title only, but not in praiſes. And leſt you ſhould think this argues two different natures, how often do you read in the ſame book, that there is *a Lamb in the midſt of the throne*, and that *he ſits down with the Father upon his throne?* Surely thoſe people that will illuſtrate the mediation of our Lord, by *Joſeph*'s miniſtry in *Egypt*, have forgot that tho' *Pharaoh* made a prodigious grant, yet he gave this cloſure to the whole, *In the throne I will be greater than thou.* But we have no ſuch ſaving as this in what is ſaid of Chriſt; ſo far from it, that *to the Son* the Father [not the Pſalmiſt, but the Father] ſaith, *Thy throne,* Heb. i. 8. *O God, is for ever and ever.*

His eſtabliſhment in the office of Meſſiah would never entitle him to any more than a ſubordinate glory. He is not to be worſhip'd upon that account, if he had not a prior claim. But this is the mind of infinite wiſdom; ſuch things are done, that all men may honour the Son *as* they honour the Father. Nor could it be ſaid upon any other foundation than that of an equality, *He that honours not the Son, honours not the Father who has ſent him.* Joh. v. 23.

March 13, 1719-20.

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2. HAVING in these particulars given you some account what the glory of our Redeemer is, I am in the next place to consider the manner of his coming by it. And the words of my text tell us, that this is what he was RECEIV'D into. You will soon apprehend that this expression is to be open'd with the same variety that we have observ'd in the other. Our Saviour's being *receiv'd* is as different as the *glory* that belongs to him. For if the word be applied to what he carries his human nature into, it must be understood of that which by no means can be said of him either as Mediator, or as God over all blessed for ever. And yet as the text led us to consider all his glory in the several parts of his character, so his being *receiv'd* into it may be distributed under the same heads; that is,

1. We shall enquire what this receiving was into the glory confer'd upon him as he is *man*.

2. How it belongs to him as *Mediator*.

3. In what sense it may be said of him, as he is *the mighty God, and the everlasting Father*. As different as these names and titles are, the Scripture has concentred them all in him. Nor can we lose any of 'em without a waste of that doctrine that has hitherto nourish'd us up, and in which we ought

ought to *abound with thanksgiving.* For tho' our great concern lies with him as Mediator, yet denying either of his natures is destroying the offices that he sustains in 'em both. SERM. XLVIII.

1. When it is said he is receiv'd into glory, if this is to be understood of the *human nature*, there are several things that may have their interpretation that way. 1. We read that a cloud receiv'd him out of the Apostles sight. 2. That Angels attended him all along, from his resurrection to the place of his reward. 3. That he is fix'd in heaven, never to remove out of it, till he comes to judge the world, and fetch up the bodies of those that sleep in the dust. 4. That the Father has pronounc'd the great sentence of honour, and given him a name above every name. These things relate to the manner of his being *receiv'd* in our nature, and therefore fall short of that upon which he claims the adoration of his people; and in going over 'em, we may observe the hope that is set before us; for in these respects he is *the first-fruits of them that sleep*, and a pattern to all his followers. The man Christ Jesus is thus exalted as the first-born among many brethren: they that serve him as God are to follow him as he is man; and *where he is, there shall his servants be. He that rais'd up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus.* Rom. viii. 29. 2 Cor. iv. 14.

(1.) I begin with that which the Scripture has taken notice of, that a *cloud received him out* of the sight of those that were gazing after him. This being no more than a very general circumstance, I enter first upon that, before we come to the other things that were of greater importance to his glory. Thus you read the grand event that clos'd up all his conversation with the disciples, *That it came to pass whilst he blessed them, he was parted from 'em, and carried up into heaven.* As in that blessing Acts i. 9. Luke xiv. 57.

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he open'd heaven to *them*, so the same moment it was open'd to *him*.

The historian in another book speaks of *the day in which he was taken up*, and afterwards he describes the manner of it, that *when he had spoken these things, whilst they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. They look'd*, as it is added, *stedfastly towards heaven, as* he went up; partly to see him as long as they could, to follow the moving glory; and partly to give the world an account in what way he will come again, which, as the Angels who stood by 'em in shining garments reported, would be *in like manner as they had seen him go into heaven*; that is, in a visible way, *he shall come in clouds, and every eye shall see him.*

Rev. i. 7.

And tho' this intimates his lower nature as a man, yet it's among those things that in other places give out the majesty of a God. Thus we read of him that he is *exceeding glorious*; and it appears in this, that *he makes the clouds his chariot, and rides upon the wings of the wind.* And again, the church prays, *O that thou wouldst rent the heavens and come down!* Tho' these expressions signifie the greatness of God, yet neither of 'em relate to a matter so important, as that upon which our Saviour was to be reveal'd; I mean, to judge the world: *Clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.*

Psal. civ. 2, 3.

Isa. lxiv. 1.

Ps. xcvii. 2.

The martyr *Stephen* had a sample of this, when he saw the heavens open'd. The way how that was done is no more to be explain'd than the vision that he had within it, *Jesus standing at the right hand of God.* The opening of the heavens, the unfolding of those *everlasting doors*, is what we never saw; nor do I suppose that any of the croud about him could be witnesses to it. His eye was strengthen'd

ſtrengthen'd to ſee that, becauſe afterwards it was to ſee no more in this world. However, this agrees to the accounts we have of a Redeemer. Thus we read of his acceſſion to the reward: *I ſaw in the night-viſion one like the Son of man come with the clouds of heaven; and he came to the antient of days, and there was given him a dominion, and glory, and kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages ſhould ſerve him.* This coming in the clouds of heaven anſwers to what *David* ſaith, *He made darkneſs his ſecret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies.* Dan. vii. 13, 14. Pſal. xviii. 11.

Thus will Chriſt be reveal'd as a judge; and when he ſo comes, it is *in the glory of his Father.* *The powers of heaven ſhall be ſhaken, and then ſhall they ſee the Son of man coming with power and great glory.* The gates of that palace are to fly open, and *the Lord to deſcend with a ſhout.* He ſhall iſſue out of the cloud, juſt as he enter'd into it, with a joyful noiſe. In the creation God ſet the firmament in the midſt of the waters, and it *divided the waters that were above it from thoſe that were below it.* This is repreſented as a body of prodigious firmneſs, as *Elihu* ſaith, *Haſt thou with him ſpread the ſky which is ſtrong, and as a molten looking-glaſs? i. e.* as a piece of ſhining braſs able to let the light thro', and to keep the water in. Now *this* gave way in a manner that we cannot account for, when our Saviour went back to heaven. There are two improvements we ſhould make of this noble circumſtance in his being receiv'd up to glory. Mat. xvi. 27. Luke xxi. 26, 27. 1 Theſ. iv. 16. Gen. i. 6.

Firſt, That we will ſtick cloſe to his doctrine, not give up any part of the honour that belongs to him: *He that abides not in the doctrine of Chriſt has not God; he that abides in the doctrine of Chriſt has both the Father and the Son.* The Apoſtle himſelf has led us into this inference, *Seeing we have a great Highprieſt that is paſs'd into the heavens*, thro' one 2 Joh. 9. Heb. iv. 14.

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one heaven into another, *Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.* An indolence about the truth, or a cowardice in maintaining it, are a virtual reproach upon One that is gone away with so much pomp. His piercing the clouds, his entring the heavens, is an argument for us to hold fast our profession, and not be either wheedled or bullied out of it. For

Tho' this is said of him as a man, yet according to his own reasoning, it supposes another nature; for *no man has ascended up into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven.* As a man he had not ascended into heaven at the time that he said it, and as the Son of man, he was not in heaven, nor in that character did he come down from heaven: But he speaks of his going thither, and being there, even whilst he was upon earth; which no one could say but he who had declar'd before, *Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?*

Joh. iii. 13.

If we *hold fast* our profession in this article, we shall scarce be persuaded to let it go at the pull of a whiffling criticism upon those words, the Son of man who *is* in heaven. That because the expression signifies he *was* there in another place, therefore it must do so in this. He must have a loose hold of his faith indeed, who parts with it so easily, and to carry on a force upon a word shall make nonsense of the whole verse. For if the phrase *who is in heaven* signifies *who was in heaven*, it tells us no more than we had in the former sentence, that he *came down from heaven.* Is there any necessity when I say I came from a place, to tell you that I have been there? Does not my coming thence suppose all that? But it's plain, our Saviour was to convince *Nicodemus* of his Divine perfections, and therefore he talks to him of his ascending into heaven, which cannot be understood

of his resurrection. But to take off his surprize, he affirms again, that even at that time he *was in heaven.* As it had been observ'd before, that *the only begotten Son is in the bosom of the Father,* whilst he declar'd him upon earth. He was *in the Father, and the Father in him. Thou Father art in me, and I in thee.* And tho' this Jesus is now set at nought, and the profession we make of him slurr'd by some, and lampoon'd by others, yet let us hold it fast from the consideration that we do it in the cause of one who has *pass'd into the heavens.* And,

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Joh. i. 18. xiv. 10. xvii. 21.

Secondly, This takes off all the objection of unbelief against our following him. We are ready to say, *How can he judge thro' the dark cloud?* And it is a more difficult question, how shall we pass thro' it, when we are taken out of the graves? Indeed *how* it will be we know not; but he that open'd the heavens for himself can find a way thither for our bodies as well as his own. They who are *alive at the coming of the Lord,* and they who sleep in Jesus shall be *caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air,* when they go to be *ever with the Lord; wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

1 Thes. iv. 17, 18.

(2.) Another thing included in his being receiv'd up into glory is the attendance of the Angels. This reaches from his grave to his throne. One of 'em came with *great power, and roll'd away the stone from the door of the sepulchre.* Two of 'em staid behind, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, *where the body of Jesus had lain,* to tell his disciples what had happen'd. As they had made the keepers like dead men, they struck a new life into his followers, bidding 'em not fear, because *the Lord was risen indeed.* And tho' we do not read much of 'em during his forty days converse with the disciples, yet when he was to go away, the same *multitude of the heavenly host* went with him up, who came with him down. How

Mat. xxviii. 2, 7.

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How mean ſoever his abode in the world might be, yet his coming into it, and going out of it, had the magnificence of heaven. This was all along foretold, not only as a reward to the human nature, but as a teſtimony to the Divine. For we read that *the chariots of God are twenty thouſand, even thouſands of Angels.* As the title of God ſhews us to whom theſe Angels paid their homage, ſo when they are call'd *his chariots*, it refers to ſome particular ſeaſon in which they gave their attendance. And you read in the next words when that was, *Thou haſt aſcended up on high, thou haſt led captivity captive.* 'Tis in vain to wreſt this laſt expreſſion from an application to our Saviour, and to that very period that I am now ſpeaking of. The Apoſtle by repeating the whole paſſage has fix'd this ſenſe upon it. And they muſt be hard put to it, who will ſay that the *chariots* belong to one, and *aſcending up on high* is the act of another. He who aſcended is our Saviour, and he who was the owner of theſe chariots is the moſt high God.

Pſ. lxviii. 17, 18.

The Angels lov'd his human nature as the beſt ſervant to the Divine; but yet it was to a God appearing and manifeſting himſelf in that nature that they paid this eminent duty. As a man the Angels had a charge concerning him, that in their hands they might bear him up; but as a God he was not worſhip'd as tho' he needed any thing; for Angels principalities and powers, being created by him, were created for him. In all things, and over all perſons, *he has the pre-eminence.*

This ſhews us what good hands we are put into. As all the Angels of God, upon his reſurrection, are call'd to worſhip him, ſo they are ſent forth as *miniſtring ſpirits* to thoſe who are the heirs of ſalvation. Upon the road they help 'em on, and at the end they help 'em up. It is ſaid of *Lazarus*, that *he was carried by the Angels into Abraham's*

Luke xvi. 22.

bosom. And they who have done so much for our souls will wait for the day of fetching up our bodies. For *the Son of Man comes with his Angels to sever the wicked from among the just, to gather out of his kingdom those that offend and commit iniquity,* to fetch out of the graves those that are sleeping there, and rebuild the dust into bodies. This we are assur'd of from what they did to our blessed Lord. As they receiv'd him, so they are to receive us; for their love is under the same rule with ours: *Every one that loves him that begot, loves him also who is begotten of him.* SERM. XLVIII.

(3.) His being receiv'd into heaven must be understood of an abode there. The Lord said unto this *our Lord, sit thou at my right hand.* That expression signifies both the greatness and the duration of the dignity: therefore we read, that *having by himself purg'd away our sins, he for ever sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.* Ps. cx. 1. Heb. i. 3.

The doctrine of transubstantiation is folly to our senses, and blasphemy to our faith; 'tis impossible both in nature and religion, that the body of Jesus should be any where but in heaven. He is to come no more upon earth, till he comes to judge it. All the stories of his appearing in cloysters, and upon mountains to some favourite Saints, make the Christian religion as ridiculous, as the fables of *Jupiter* and *Mercury* did that of the Heathen. When he carried his body up to heaven, it was to stay there, not to be wanting one moment from the throne. We have no more occasion for it upon earth till the time of the restitution of all things. The believer, who knows what he talks of, does not desire to see *Jesus in the flesh* upon a visit to us here below. He is not in heaven, as the Angels are, the messengers between two worlds, always going and coming; no, but *the heavens have receiv'd him: He ever appears in the presence of God* Heb. ix. 24.

for

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for us. The disciples saw him no more. The Apostle *Paul*, who saw Christ Jesus the Lord, did not see him come down upon earth, but only looking down from heaven. His descending to live here a thousand years in Person is a scheme so little reveal'd in the Scriptures, that the admirers of it are forc'd to seek out many inventions.

I know of no season in which he will come upon earth, but when he comes to burn up that earth, and suffer it to be no more. When the earth has given up her dead, there's an end of it. It's first to be open'd, and then to be consum'd by the glory of the Lord. For when he sits upon the great white throne, *From his face both the earth and the heaven will flee away, and there shall be no more place for 'em.* When he went to him that sent him, he had finish'd the work that was given him to do; and therefore saith, *I am no more in the world.*

Rev. xx. 11.

Those many declarations that he makes of a continual presence with his people, cannot be understood of his human nature without a violence both to Scripture and reason. Tho' we know him no more after the flesh, yet he *manifests himself to us.* Tho' he is far above all heavens in place as well as dignity, yet he is *in the midst of two or three* who are met together in his name. Tho' he has left us and is gone away, nevertheless he is *with us to the end of the world.* As to his body, it's no where else but before the throne of God; but there's *no fleeing from his presence, or going from his Spirit.*

Here's a twofold comfort for his faithful servants. *First*, That they trust in one who is every where: they may in all places call upon the name of the Lord Jesus. Let any persons try how they can manage the notion of an omnipresent creature, that is both limited and infinite. And, *Secondly*, notwithstanding this, it's our joy that we have a Saviour who is confin'd to one place: In

that

that nature which he took *from* us, and took *for* us, he's a perpetual inhabitant in heaven. SERM. XLVIII.

In this he is our example; thus it is to be with us: *Him that overcomes,* saith he, *will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall no more go out, or come in.* Indeed we do not go thither with our full nature all at once, as he did. We are carried off by parts. But, *First,* the Soul is taken up to *stand before the throne of God day and night, and serve him in his temple, and he that sits upon the throne will dwell among us.* And, *Secondly,* when the time of the dead comes, then shall our bodies be rais'd up once for all; not to stay out another life upon earth, or look back to the places where once they liv'd, as *Lot*'s wife did, but to be caught up at once; ἁρπαγησόμεθα, we shall be snatch'd away, and move with speed as well as glory, to be *ever with the Lord.* Rev. iii. 12. Rev. vii. 15.

(4.) Christ's being receiv'd into glory, as a man, signifies the Father's pronouncing the sentence of reward upon him. He was a *righteous servant,* he *glorified the Father upon earth, and finish'd the work that was given him to do.* For this they could appeal to the *Jews: Ye men of Israel, hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth was a man approv'd of God among you, by signs, and miracles, and wonders which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know.* He became *obedient to death, even the death of the cross, and therefore God has highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, both of things that are upon earth, and things that are in the heavens, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father.* Joh. xvii. 4. Acts ii. 22. Phil. ii. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Here are two things plainly to be observ'd in that Scripture. *First,* A dignity confer'd upon a suffering nature. This is exalted with a happiness that it had not before. But, *Secondly,* this is all along

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along consider'd as united to one who is really God; because here's a mention of those glories that are understood to be the peculiar of a Divine Nature. As, in particular, that *in his name* every knee should bow, both in heaven and earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord, or that Jesus is JEHOVAH, as the words would have run, had they been express'd in the *Hebrew* language. It's true, the bowing of the knee, and confessing of a delegated empire, might have been given to a creature, if God had not reserv'd it to himself; yet it's now too late to suppose that it ever shall or can be so, when he has said, *I have sworn by myself, and the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that to me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear, and in the Lord, in* JEHOVAH *shall one say, I have righteousness and strength.*

Isa. xlv. 23, 24.

What? shall the great God with all that solemnity challenge this bowing of the knee to himself in the old Testament, and does he give up his glory to another in the new? To say, that this is *to the glory of God the Father*, does not abate, but confirm the argument; for that either denotes an equality of nature, or otherwise it is a consideration of no force. It's not to the glory of God the Father, that what he always call'd his own should by a transfer be given to one who is infinitely below him. And therefore,

We have both these expressions united in another place: *We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ*; FOR *it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, to me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess to God.* Its being written that every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess to God, is no argument at all that Christ has the judgment seat, if he himself is not *that God.* But the Apostle who reasons thus concludes upon the whole, SO THEN *every one of us shall give an account of himself*

Rom. xiv. 10, 11, 12.

himself to God. Standing before the judgment seat is the same with giving an account. That judgment seat is *Christ's*, that account is to be given to *God.* SERM. XLVIII.

And tho' he will come to judgment in the human nature, yet his capacity for it supposes a Divine. As a man he must have the highest place, and be above the Angels, but it's only as a God that he *searches the hearts, and renders to every one according to his works, for God is judge of all.* It's only as God that he bestows eternal life, for *eternal life is the gift of God.* As God he calls us out of our graves, for it is *God who quickens the dead.* It's only as God that he can answer the dependence of all his people, for *our faith and hope must be in God.*

Thus have I consider'd his being receiv'd into glory, as that was a reward to the human nature; and I hope it's not in vain, that I have endeavour'd to keep in your view the belief of a Divine Nature: For as it was *that* which made the human always pleasing to the Father, as it was *that* which made the death of the human an acceptable sacrifice, so this is the greatest article of glory to it, that *the fulness of the Godhead dwells in him bodily.*

2. I have formerly shewn you, that he has a glory as *Mediator.* Now his being receiv'd into that gives us quite another manner of thinking. For tho' this does suppose him to be the man Christ Jesus, yet in every notion of his mediatorial character, we must of necessity look upon him as God; there's no leaving out either of the natures. We can think and speak of him distinctly as a man, we can also tell what is peculiar to him as God, but as Mediator we must take in both. Now, he is receiv'd into *this glory.* 1. As the Father owns him in an union of both natures. 2. As the Angels recognize him in this comprehensive character.

3. As

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3. As he himself declares his resolution to continue both God and man for ever. 4. As all his proceedings in nature, grace and providence are with this mysterious union.

(1.) He was received by the Father into the glory of the *Mediator,* as he is own'd in this union of both natures. As he was the Father's delight, brought up with him, and rejoicing always before him, so he could be consider'd only as a God. *The glory that he had with the Father before the world was,* is no other than the glory of the Divine nature; but now upon his ascending into heaven, here's a new state of the case.

The question is, whether he must not lay down the nature he so lately took up, in order to continue this fellowship that he had with the Father before the foundation of the world? This is so far from being a condition, that the Lord said unto our Lord, *Sit thou at my right Hand.* By which he proclaims that the person of the Son is the same since he became a man that he ever was before. The Father acts in communion with him as he al-

Psal. cx. 2, 3, 4. ways had done: *The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Sion.* 'Tis the rod of THY strength, and yet the Lord shall send it out: *Rule* THOU *in the midst of* THINE *enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.* 'Tis sometimes called *his,* and sometimes *thine;* for the appellation seems to change in these words, *The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath:* Here one would think he speaks to the Father, as before he plainly does to the Son.

Now the Apostle argues from this very instance,

Heb. i. 13. that he can be no creature, *To which of the Angels said he at any time, sit thou at my right hand, till I have made thine enemies thy footstool?* If this sitting at the right hand does not denote an equality, he might have said it to any of the Angels a thousand

times,

times, and made it to signify no more in their case than it does in ours, a place of happiness; for the godly are to be at his right hand. But it's plain the Apostle means by it something that never was given to them, nor ever could be; and if he never said that at any time to one of the Angels, much less would he ever say it of a man. Can it be expected, that he should at any time call one made of a woman, to come and take a place at his right hand? And yet this he has done, not by advancing the human nature to an adoration, for it can never cease to be a creature, but by owning him, who took it, in the Deity that he had before; that his being a child born, and a Son given, did not hinder him from continuing *the mighty God, the everlasting Father.* Isa. ix. 6.

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SERMON XLIX.

Mar. 27, 1720.

(2.) HE is received by the Angels and saints into the glory of a Mediator, as they recognize him in this comprehensive character, *Let all the Angels of God worship him.* Heb. i. 6. The union of two natures in one person, makes his name *wonderful* to them. Isa. ix. 6. By that they are satisfied, pleas'd and secur'd of their own happiness. They are admitted to a greater insight into the scheme of our redemption; and as there is nothing more surprizing in it than the composition of a Saviour, so this lies more open to them than it us'd

SERM. XLIX.

SERM. XLIX. to do. They see how he that was *made of the seed of David, according to the flesh, is declared to be the Son of God with power, and is over all, God blessed for ever.*

Rom. i. 3, 4.

ix. 5. I believe that at the resurrection of Jesus Christ, or rather at his ascension to the right hand of God, as he carried the two natures along with him, so the union between 'em became more visible and entertaining than it had been. That was not only a period of greater revelations to our world, but to theirs above. The Apostle acquaints us with both

Eph. iii. 8. these particulars, *Unto me, who am less than all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.* The subject of his ministry was the *riches of Christ*, not only what he brought to his people, but what he contain'd in his person, and therefore they are called *unsearchable.*

This description that he gives of his work throws us full upon the objection that some make against the Gospel. That if it is a mystery, it cannot be preach'd, because a mystery is what people cannot know, and preaching is upon a subject they do know, or otherwise they are suppos'd to talk in the dark. This sort of reasoning is admir'd, as if it was invincible; but apply it to the text I have now given you, and try the force of it then. *Paul* tells us that he was in an extraordinary way sent to preach the riches of Christ, and yet in the same breath he saith these are *unsearchable* riches. He was to preach what he could not find. The thing that he made known to others was a depth that he never came to the bottom of himself; and if people will laugh at that as a contradiction, 'tis no matter. It just happens to our Saviour's doctrine as it did to his person; *'Tis a stumbling block, and rock of offence to some,* but *to those that believe it is precious.* They find a pleasure in rolling and swimming where they cannot reach the ground. This

This Apoſtle knew he was call'd to *make all men* SERM. XLXI. *ſee what is the fellowſhip of the myſtery that from the beginning of the world was hid in God who created all things by Jeſus Chriſt.* And as if from this time of revelation ſome light was to ſpring upwards as well as come downwards; as if the other world was to be a receiver as well as a giver, he adds, *To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be made known by the church the manifold wiſdom of God, according to the eternal purpoſe which he purpoſed in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* Theſe principalities and powers that have their dignity in heavenly places need not to be told by us, that God is wiſe: They have ſeen and admired that attribute in the frame of nature, and the revolutions of Providence, but here's a *manifold wiſdom* of God, which has a particular poſition to the good of his church upon earth; and the ſcheme that is wrought here below ſhall be ever wonder'd at above; 'tis a new Goſpel to them, the day-ſpring from on high to heaven, as well as to the habitable parts of the earth; 'tis indeed according to the eternal purpoſe which he purpos'd in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord; but this was a thing *hid in God,* known with a limitation even in heaven it ſelf, till he that all along deſign'd our redemption carried up the nature in which he completed it; and now though we have it at the *firſt* hand, they have it at the *beſt.*

ver. 9.

ver. 10.

The wonderful union between God and man was eſtabliſhed in our world. 'Tis here that the child was born and the Son given, but it is moſt beheld and admir'd in their world. They ſee at large what we only ſee in part. They that beheld his glory in the fleſh, and they that behold it now do it by faith; and if this is oppos'd to ſight, 'tis a ſort of ſeeing and not ſeeing. All the love that proceeds from it is a love to one *whom we have not ſeen,* in whom though now we ſee him

1 Pet. i. 8.

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not we yet believe; but in heaven faith is no longer the medium of an imperfect vision, nor the hindrance of a complete one. They own him in both his natures, as God and man. Thus their praises to him, and for him, go together, according to that prophetick *Psalm, Prayer shall be made for him continually, and daily shall he be praised.* This mixture of loving the human nature, adoring the divine, and admiring the union between both will be more eminently the work of heaven. We find Saints and Angels employed upon these delights.

Psal. lxxii. 18.

You have an instance of this in the *Saints*, who plainly in their language weave together the properties and the merit of the two natures. They call him *the faithful witness*, which, though it is true of him as a man, yet may be understood of his attribute as a God. They say he is *the first-begotten from the dead*; This you know must refer to his body. That *he is the Prince of the kings of the earth*; tho' that may be consider'd as a reward to the nature in which he suffered, yet it is often mentioned as the glory of another, *that he is the King of kings, and Lord of lords*; and he of whom this is said *only has immortality, and dwells in unapproachable light.*

Rev. i. 6.

Having thus described his *person*, there's the same variety to be observed in the tribute of their *devotions, Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* His loving us which always led on the purchase that he made of us is called an everlasting love. The blood that he shed can be understood of him no otherwise than he is man; but the virtue of this, its washing us from our sins, must be derived from him under other considerations: For it is the prerogative of God to *pardon iniquity, to put away transgression*; and therefore *the finishing of sin* is not the

effect

effect of his dying as he was a creature; for all that he might have done without any benefit to us, but it's grounded upon his *bringing in an everlasting righteousness*. This making us kings and priests is what he deserved, or rather attempted as a man, but it's an honour that comes from the throne. 'Tis only a God who can make us sit in the divine presence as *kings*, and serve him as *priests*. 'Tis not with the blood of a man that we come to the Lord and bow our selves to the most high God. The divine Majesty would be always inaccessible if he was not the *way*, who is also *the truth and the life*. Thus you see in what language their praises are form'd and sung, that they both admire what he suffer'd as man, and receive what he gives as God.

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Dan. ix. 24.

Joh. xiv 4.

In the same strain do the *Angels* take notice of him. You may ask indeed, what concern they have in a nature that is below their own, or how it should ever be a part of their praises that *Jesus died and rose again*. And it is very true, he is not their Redeemer in that fulness of relation in which he is ours, yet it is said, *he made peace by the blood of his cross*, i. e. he restored peace where it was lost, and he establish'd it where it was continued; for both these senses are within the comprehension of the word. *By himself*, as it ought to be translated, *to reconcile all things, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven.*

Col. i. 20.

Reconciling things in heaven is not to be conceived of in the way we speak of that work among things on earth; to us it is a procuring a deserving and an opening out a treasure of happiness; to them it is a closing them in, and giving the stamp of eternity to what they enjoy; and therefore they admire what he did upon the cross. The purchase that he made there was a confirmation for them: so that the Apostle saith, *I beheld and heard the voice*

Rev. v. 11, 12.

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voice of many Angels about the throne, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. What they admire in him is his being slain, the death that no other than his human nature could bow to; but the merit that arose out of this, and was equal to all the honour, and glory, and blessing that are ascribed to him leads up their thoughts to God. For a creature can never deserve what is peculiar to God. No obedience can make a person equal to him that sits upon the throne, if he was not so in nature: and thus do both the Saints and Angels own him who is God and man, and celebrate this union in their praises, and will do so for ever.

(3.) He is receiv'd into glory as Mediator with regard to his own act; that is, he has declared his resolution to continue both God and man for ever. As the human nature is what he took in the fulness of time, so he might lawfully lay it down again at the end of time, and when he had given up the *kingdom*, throw off the *union*: But this he will not do. Tho' he has our nature to very different purposes to what he once pursued, yet 'tis the same in substance that ever it was; a created, limited, and dependent soul; a real, a penetrable, and solid body.

There's a great dispute among those who are in the humour to maintain it, whether Christ's taking upon him the human nature was an act of humiliation. The trick of the question lies in this, that the human nature is now a part of his glory, and possest of a full reward, and therefore *having it* could be no branch of his suffering. But not to trifle with unedifying talk, it is very plain, that his taking upon him *the form of a servant*, and being

being *found in fashion as a man*, are a great instance of his obedience to the will of God. He is still in the same nature, praised in it, and admired for it. He has truly lov'd it, he does not come into it as a way-faring man to tarry for a season. But to shew that the union between him and his people is everlasting, he makes that between the Divine and the human nature to be so too; and this will farther appear from the examples I shall give you under the next head; and that is, SERM. XLIX.

(4.) He proceeds as God and man in all the works of nature, grace and providence. And therefore you will often observe that those things are said of him as a man which can be true of none but a God; nor must they be understood of any other nature than what is divine; but it is to express the durable union between them, that the Scripture has thus disposed of words that relate to one, as if they might be transferred to the other.

Thus you're appriz'd of that well known text that there is *a church of God* which he has *purchased with his own blood*. Now tho' the blood of God sounds with a contradiction, yet the sentence is soon understood. 'Tis but a transplanted word, and only proves that he who did so bleed was no less than God. Thus he proceeds in all his remaining designs. I have mentioned them under the heads of nature, grace and providence. He declares the hypostatical union in every one of them. Act. xx. 28.

1st. In the works of nature. Thus we read of him who spake to us in these last days, that by him the Father made the worlds, and that *he upholds all things by the word of his power*. God's speaking to us *by him* signifies his being a man, *made out of the clay* as *Job* had wish'd it might be; but *making the worlds by him* is not to be comprehended in this notion of him: because these worlds were made before he was made, *i. e.* before a body Heb. i. 1, 2.

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was prepared for him, and he, who as a man could not bear the weight of his own croſs, does nevertheleſs *uphold all things by the word of his power.* This upholding of all things ſignifies a maintaining them in their being; and the term [all things] muſt include Angels as well as men. Thus when it is ſaid, *Angels, principalities and powers are created by him and for him,* it is added, that *he is before all things, and by him do all things conſiſt.* Now in that notion of him we ſpeak as *Job* did to God, *What ſhall I do to thee, O thou preſerver of men!* Or as the Pſalmiſt ſays, it is he who *holds our ſouls in life:* Or as *Moſes* had ſaid before him, *He is thy life, and the length of thy days.* It can never be ſaid of a lower nature, that it upholds a higher. 'Tis againſt all proportion to ſay that the Son of man is the Lord, or the ſupport of Angels, and yet you ſee theſe things are mingled together.

Col. i. 16.

Job vii. 20.

Thus the Apoſtle goes on, that *having by himſelf purged our ſins, he for ever ſat down at the right hand of the Majeſty on high, being made ſo much better than the Angels, as he had by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.* That expreſſion, he purged away our ſins, will eaſily bring us down into the loweſt conceptions of him; but that, *for this,* he ſhould for ever ſit at the right hand of God, is no way to be accounted for, but from an antecedent dignity. 'Tis true, as a man, as a creature, as a ſervant, he is made better than the Angels; but it is ſtill with a view to this, that he has by inheritance a more excellent name than they. He was originally, and by right of nature, called by a name which they had not. *For to which of the Angels ſaid the Father at any time, Thou art my Son?*

Heb. i. 4.

You're thus to look upon him who is both God and man, as one that bears up the pillars of the earth. In this manner he ſpeaks by the prophet,

phet, *At my rebuke I dry up the sea; I make the rivers a wilderness, their fish stinks because there is no water, and dies for thirst. I cloath the heavens with blackness, and make darkness their covering.* And who is this? One who afterwards speaks of a much lower nature; *The Lord God has given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. The Lord God has opened mine ear and I was not rebellious; I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, I hid not my face from shame and spitting.* Would it not be strange to hear a person whose very face was covered with darkness to talk of his covering the heavens with it? But it shews us, that as these things are to be understood of two different natures, so they are carried on by an union between them both.

SERM. XLIX. Isa. l. 2, 3. ver. 4, 5, 6.

2dly, This is still more visible in the works of grace. What he does as a days-man between God and us supposes that he is both God and man in his own person. *There's but one God, and but one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.* That phrase is not to be understood as exclusive of his divinity; for as a way is made for us *thro' the vail, that is to say, his flesh,* so our welcome there is owing to his being *Highpriest over the house of God.* And whence does this arise? It is indeed a constitution, but it supposes an eternity of nature. Hence as the Lord has sworn to him, *Thou art a Priest for ever,* so the foundation of that is, that *this man,* or as it ought to be render'd, this person, *because he continues for ever, has an unchangeable priesthood.* His continuing for ever is considered as antecedent and fundamental to his unchangeable priesthood. This, as the words there tell us, is to continue for ever, both by a divine appointment, and by his own choice; *for though the law made men highpriests that have infirmity,*

1 Tim. ii. 6. Heb. x. 20, 21. vii. 24. ver. 28.

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yet the word of the oath, that is since the law, has made the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

'Tis in this complicated way that he gives promises to his people. One time he would have them take the comfort of this thought, that *he went to the Father, and they saw him no more*; from this does the Spirit *convince the world of righteousness*; i. e. his going to the Father and making no return back again is an argument that the righteousness which he brought in upon the cross, he now brings forth before the throne. This plainly refers to his human nature, we are to *see him no more after the flesh*; and yet the same mouth has told us that which is contradictory to the other, if it is not to be understood of another nature, *Yet a little while and the world sees me no more, but ye see me, and because I live, ye shall live also.* This is more than we can either believe to be true, or expect to be made good from Christ himself as a man. 'Tis not the human nature that we see again; 'tis not because *this* lives that therefore we live also. The life of *that* is an argument of our resurrection, but it's not the fountain out of which we are supplied with the graces of the Spirit.

Joh. xvi. 10.

Joh. xiv. 19.

3dly, 'Tis thus that he proceeds in all the designs of his providence, by which I don't understand any thing distinct from nature and grace, but rather what is comprehensive of both. Under this head I will give you two particulars, which do express the union of the divine and human natures, *viz.* his conduct of the church, and his judgment of the world.

First, 'Tis as God and man that he rules his Church; giving them laws and life below, and managing the whole stock of their affairs above. He is *head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fulness of him who fills all in all.* Hence we read of *heaven opening, and behold a white horse,*

Eph. i. 22, 23.

Rev. xix. 11, 12, 13.

and he that sat on him was call'd faithful and true, SERM.
and in righteousness does he judge and make war. XLIX.
This you will apply to what he does for his people against all their enemies: *His eyes are as a flame of fire, and on his head are many crowns, and he has a name written that no man knows but he himself.*

You find, tho' some among us will allow no mysteries, no unintelligible things on earth, yet there's a great deal of 'em in heaven. It is added, *He was cloath'd with a vesture dipt in blood, and his name is call'd the word of God.* Here's a plain reference to the two natures. The garment that he wears is dipt in blood. 'Tis thus that he is *glorious in his apparel.* You cannot possibly strike off this from a relation to his humanity. And yet he who is so attir'd is call'd by a name that he had eternally before these garments: for he is the Word of God, *the Word that in the beginning was with God, the Word that was God himself, by whom were all things created, and without whom was nothing made that was made.* Joh. i. 3.

Nay, the Apostle goes on to tell us the signification both of the garment that he wears, and the name that he is known by, that *he trod the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.* No wonder then that he is red in his apparel, and his vesture dipt in blood. This he did, when *the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all.* He was then bruis'd, his soul was put to grief, and made an offering for sin. And yet upon this vesture, which is the memorial of his sufferings, he has a name written, *the King of kings, and Lord of lords.* Thus you see, how he preserves the united character, the dependence of the human nature with the supremacy of the Divine. ver. 15. ver. 16.

'Tis from hence that we have access to the mercy-seat. Both these considerations enter into our hope. *First,* that *all things are naked and open to him*

SERM. XLIX. *him with whom we have to do; that there is no creature that is not manifeſt in his Sight; and that Jeſus, the Son of God, as the great Highprieſt, is enter'd into the heavens.* And, *Secondly*, that *we have not an Highprieſt which cannot be touch'd with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without ſin.* The former is plainly to be underſtood of the Divine Nature, and the latter of the human; but from both of 'em we argue for our *coming boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need.* As a man he can have *compaſſion on the ignorant, and them that are out of the way, ſeeing that he himſelf was compaſs'd about with thoſe infirmities.* And as God he has not only compaſſion but relief for us; and in that notion of him it were blaſphemy to ſay, that he is compaſs'd about with any infirmity.

Heb. iv. 13, 14, 15, 16. v. 2.

Secondly, You will alſo ſee that the Scripture has repreſented him as a judge of the world under this union of natures: *God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteouſneſs by the man whom he has ordain'd, whereof he has given aſſurance to all men, in that he has rais'd him from the dead.* As man he ſits upon the throne; thus the ſuffering nature is to be rewarded. As God he *judges the world*; thus the obſcur'd nature is to be declar'd. *The Father*, that Perſon of the Trinity who was not incarnate, *judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son. He has given him authority to execute judgment, becauſe he is the Son of man.* And yet this is no way deſtructive of what the Chriſtian religion tells us, that we *come to Jeſus the Mediator of the new Teſtament, and to God the Judge of all*; which it would not do, if he who is judge of all, was not over all God bleſſed for ever: *Our God ſhall come, and ſhall not keep ſilence; a fire ſhall devour before him, and it ſhall be very tempeſtuous*

Acts xvii. 31. Joh. v. 22. Heb. xii. 23. Pſal. l. 3.—6.

tempeſtuous round about him; he ſhall call to the hea- SERM.
vens from above, and to the earth that he may judge XLIX.
his people. Gather my Saints together unto me, thoſe that have made a covenant with me by ſacrifice. The heavens ſhall declare his righteouſneſs, for God is judge himſelf. What an honour will be put upon our nature, when he who has taken it into union with him comes to awake the dead, and cloſe up the eternal fate of men and Angels! Thus we know that *our Redeemer lives, and that he ſhall ſtand at the* Job xix.
latter day upon the earth; and tho' after our ſkin 25, 26.
worms deſtroy this body, yet in our fleſh we ſhall ſee, him who is really, GOD.

SERMON L.

April 10, 1720.

3. AS you have heard at large that the glory of Chriſt Jeſus is what belongs to him as God, and is mention'd with a fulneſs of language peculiar to the Divine Nature; ſo when we conſider his being *receiv'd* into that, we muſt take the word in a very different ſenſe from what it bore under the other two particulars. Receiving the human nature into glory was giving it what it never had, and carrying it where it never was. But to ſay that a God is *thus* receiv'd into glory, is to blaſpheme *his* nature, and confound *our own*, and darken counſel by words without knowledge.

SERM. L.

There's

SERM. L.

There's no place where he was not; there's no perfection that he had not. Whilst he was on earth he call'd himself *the Son of man who is in heaven*; which phrase, as I have lately shewn you, can refer to nothing but his omnipresence. And if *Nicodemus* had not taken it so, he must have fallen into the same contempt of him that the *Jews* did whenever he open'd out any pretensions to Divinity: *They had a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.* The highpriest adjur'd him by the living God, that he should tell 'em *whether he was Christ the Son of God?* And when he had own'd it, the man who ask'd the question rent his cloaths, and charg'd him with blasphemy; and they all *said, He is guilty of death.* Tho' they look'd upon him as *a man approv'd of God among 'em, by signs, and miracles, and wonders,* yet it always rais'd an impatience when he affirm'd his Deity: *What need we any farther witness, ye have heard his blasphemy?* You may see this in a few examples.

Joh. iii. 13.

Joh. xix. 7.

Mat. xxvi. 63.—66.

Acts ii. 22.

Mar. xiv. 64.

The first I will give you is *Joh.* v. 16. where you find that Jesus, having heal'd a poor lame man who had been long waiting at the pool of *Bethesda*, by that run himself into the displeasure of the *Jews, because he did it upon the sabbath day.* He, in vindication of this, provokes 'em by saying, *My Father works hitherto, and I work.* Several in our days could easily have explain'd these words in such a way as to clear him of blasphemy, tho' perhaps at the expence of running into it themselves. They would have pleaded to *Jews* as they now do to Christians, that calling God his Father, instead of proving that he had a Divine Nature, was a plain argument that he had not: that the very title of Father signified his subordination to him who was call'd so. Now if this is a right way of arguing, it's pity that the discovery should be reserv'd

ſerv'd to the laſt days, that the *Jews* did not know it ſeventeen hundred years ago, becauſe it might have prevented his death and their wickedneſs; for it is ſaid, THEREFORE *ſought they to kill him, becauſe he had not only broken the ſabbath, but ſaid that God was his Father, making himſelf* EQUAL WITH GOD.

Could not he as readily have anſwer'd for himſelf, as the men of our age can anſwer for him, that he had aſſerted no equality? That the word *Father* is what Angels and men are allow'd to uſe in all their approaches to God, and that therefore the enemies had done violence to his words, that they might introduce violence againſt his Perſon? But inſtead of ſetting 'em right in their way of thinking, and placing himſelf to a better advantage in their opinion, he goes on with a vaſt enlargement upon thoſe very heads that had ſo confounded 'em. That *the Father loves the Son, and ſhews him all things that he himſelf does; for as the Father raiſes the dead, and quickens 'em, even ſo the Son quickens whom he will, that all men ſhould honour the Son as they honour the Father: he that honours not the Son, honours not the Father that has ſent him.*

Obſerve here upon this argument, that if there's any diſtinction between the Father and Him, it muſt be infinite; and as they thought he had denied all that, and had made himſelf equal with God; as this would have been the greateſt blaſphemy in him to ſay ſo, it was the greateſt unkindneſs to them, if he ſhould let 'em go away with the opinion. He was bound to undeceive 'em; As he came to do *God's will*, it cannot be thought he would encourage the leaſt ſuſpicion of running away with *his glory*; and therefore to leave the *Jews* ignorant of his true meaning here, was not only a cruelty to them, but a breach of truſt in him, and could be no better than a neglect of the Father's honour.

Another

SERM. L. Another example you will meet with, *Joh.* vi. He had wrought a miracle in feeding five thousand people with five loaves; upon which many went after him. And had he contented himself with the title of a prophet that should come into the world, they would still have follow'd him; but he thought it needful to assert a great deal more, and that was his coming down from heaven: at this the *Jews* murmur'd. Now instead of striking off the sense which they put upon it, and shewing it to be false, he repeats it again: *As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eats me shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven; not as your Fathers did eat Manna and are dead, he that eats this bread shall live for ever. Many therefore of his disciples when they heard this said, This is a hard saying, who can bear it?* And what method does he take with them?

Joh. vi. 57, 58, 60.

Does he drop the doctrine to please the men? no, far from it: *When he knew in himself that the disciples murmur'd at it, he said unto 'em, Does this offend you, what and if you see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?* 'Tis plain the matter of their offence was his pretending to *that* which they thought too much for a creature. That tho' they admir'd his preaching, and were astonish'd at his miracles, yet they could have no conceptions of his divinity. Jesus said unto 'em, *Moses gave you not that bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven: they said, Lord, evermore give us of this bread. Jesus said unto 'em, I am the bread of life; he that comes unto me shall never hunger, and he that believes on me shall never thirst; but I said unto you, that ye also have seen me and believed not.*

61, 62.

And no wonder, because, as he himself tells us, there is more than external evidence necessary to that: *Therefore as I said unto you, no man can come*

unto

unto me, except it were given him of my Father. Many thousands had already come to him with abundance of zeal, as we are told all along in that very chapter. In this they acted by no higher a principle than carnal reason, which some people will not have us to speak of with any diminution. But there was a coming to him which signifies a believing in him; and this they knew nothing of, nor would they ever know it without a supernatural revelation. For *no man*, says he, *comes unto me except the Father that has sent me draw him. From that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him.* SERM. L.

This doctrine has always prov'd a parting-matter between him and hypocrites, between hypocrites and believers: *There must be heresies, that they who are approv'd may be manifest among you.* When he ask'd *Peter, Will ye also go away?* he answers, *To whom shall we go, for thou hast the words of eternal life?* If he means only thou hast preach'd to us the doctrine of eternal life, they that were gone knew this as well as they that staid. But he design'd to express as much in that confession, as Christ himself had done before in his declaration, *I am the bread of life*; and *the words that I speak to you, they are spirit and they are life.* They that forsook him took this for an extravagance that no creature ought to run into. At this they murmur'd as a thing profane in him, and unintelligible to them: *The Jews murmur'd at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. They said, Is not this Jesus the Son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know, how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? Jesus therefore answer'd and said unto 'em, Murmur not among yourselves.* Again, *I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread which I will give* 1 Cor. xi. 19. Joh. vi. 68.

SERM. L. *is my flesh, which I give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* and yet he goes on with this unintelligible doctrine, *Verily I say unto you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.*

This was the declaration that he made. To this did they that continued with him give their testimony: *We believe, and are sure, that thou art the Christ the Son of the living God.* If by this title [the Son of the living God] they did not mean one equal to the living God, they were only trifling with great words of vanity, and said no more than what the Apostates would have said as well as they. Every believer is the son of the living God by creation and sanctification: and is it likely that giving him a title, which might be taken in a contracted sense, was *that* upon which the twelve Apostles divided from the rest? Would not the whole croud who once follow'd him have said as much as the remaining disciples, if the words might have been taken in the sense that some would give us?

Indeed the question turns very short upon us, Can the Son of God be God? and I think the answer may be as short, yes, as truly as the Son of man is man. Thus you read in the eighth chapter of the same history, that the *Jews* held an argument with him a long time; and tho' he uses very provoking expressions, that they were the *servants of sin*, nay, that they were *of their father the Devil*, and fulfill'd his lusts in lies and murders, they so far bear with him, as only to rail at him: *Say we not well, that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a Devil?* but when he tells 'em, *Before Abraham was, I am*, they are out of all patience, and take up stones to throw at him as a blasphemer. They

Joh. viii. 44.

ver. 58.

would allow him any thing but Divinity. I'll give you but one example more; and that is, SERM. L.

In the tenth chapter, (where) he tells 'em of *laying down his life* as a good shepherd. He would not have 'em think by this that he quitted his pretensions to a divine sovereignty. *No*, saith he, *no man takes it from me, I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.* It's observ'd *there was a division among the Jews for these sayings, for many of 'em said*, what might sit easie enough where it is thrown as a reproach upon any minister, *He has a Devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?* Upon this the *Jews* come round about him, and desir'd that he would put 'em out of their uncertainty, and tell them plainly whether he was the Christ. He, in answer saith, *I have told you, and ye believe not.* What was it that they did not believe? that he had a divine commission? no, this was clear enough from a divine power: they knew no man could do the things that he did, except God was with him; but they did not believe that he could *give eternal life.* And they stuck above all at that sentence, *I and my Father are one.*

Joh. x. 11. 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 30.

Thus they stumbled at that stumbling-stone; as it is written, *Behold I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone, and a rock of offence, whoever believes on him shall not be ashamed.* If he had meant that the Father and he were one in consent or in design, would not all mankind think that of a Christ, nay of a prophet who came to do wonders upon earth, that the person who wrought such things was one in agreement with him who sent him? Might not *Moses* have said it? and did he not say what was equivalent to it? Was there any occasion, if that was all that he design'd, for them to take up stones, which, as they profess in the innocency of

SERM. L. ver. 33.

their error, was *for blaſphemy, becauſe he being a man had made himſelf* GOD?

You ſee, from theſe examples, where the matter ſtuck. Now what he ſaith, which ſo offended the *Jews*, might have given the ſame provocation to *Nicodemus*, when he tells him, that *the Son of Man was then in heaven.* But *every one that had heard and learned of the Father came to him*; It had pleas'd God to reveal his Son in him; ſo that his being receiv'd into glory as God cannot be underſtood in any ſenſe inconſiſtent with eternal felicity and unchangeable fulneſs. In this reſpect *he is the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever.* I therefore take the phraſe to denote ſuch things as theſe. 1. He threw off the vail that was upon his Divine Nature. 2. He did this with a deſign of never taking it on again. 3. He afreſh expos'd himſelf to the adoration of Angels. 4. He us'd the language and prerogatives of God in heaven. 5. He acted as God among his people upon earth.

Joh. vi. 45. Gal. i. 16. Heb. xiii. 8.

1. He laid aſide, he threw off the vail that was upon the Divine Nature. That he obſcur'd himſelf for a while is plain from all hiſtory, and the wonderful expreſſions which the Scripture has deliver'd it under. We read of him, that *he being in the form of God made himſelf of no reputation*; and how was that, but by taking on him *the form of a ſervant? being made in the likeneſs of men, and found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf.* You ſee by this vaſt variety of phraſes, the Apoſtle would have us eſtabliſh'd in two things.

Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8.

Firſt, The reality of Chriſt's human nature; That appears by the death of the croſs, which as it was the moſt ſhameful way of dying, ſo it muſt be the moſt evident and certain, the leaſt liable to any trick or deceit. The *Jews* themſelves, who might laugh at the miracles of his birth, were ſa-

tisfied there was none at all in his death; and yet, as here was the utmoſt evidence given to our nature, ſo, SERM. L.

Secondly, You may alſo obſerve that here was the hiding of another. That faſhion of a man, that form of a ſervant, his becoming of no reputation, hindred the world from ſeeing any thing of an antecedent glory. He did not then appear to them as having *the form of God*, whatever is the meaning of the expreſſion. They that paſſed by revil'd him, wagging their heads, and ſaying, *If thou be the Son of God, come down from the croſs.* And, *he truſted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him, for he ſaid, I am the Son of God.*

That ſentence is enough to confound the world; to us a child is born, to us a Son is given, and this is the name that he ſhall be call'd, *the mighty God, the everlaſting Father.* A God that's born as a child, a Father that's given as a Son, do not ſound ſo altogether void of myſtery as we are told every thing in our religion ought to do. But if there are any degrees in incomprehenſibles, we ſhould think it was ſtill more wonderful to be told that he, *who hid not his face from ſhame and ſpitting*, was always *full of joy with the light of God's countenance!* that he who died upon the croſs as a man, as a malefactor, was without any interruption, over all *God bleſſed for ever!* Iſa. ix. 6.

The Scripture has told us the one as plainly as the other; and tho' ſome are angry that we talk of two natures in one Perſon, yet theſe things can never be ſaid of one and the ſame nature. 'Tis vile to ſay that a God died, or that a body was at the ſame time in mount *Calvary*, and in the mount *Sion* that is above, the heavenly *Jeruſalem*; That he whoſe *goings forth have been from everlaſting* came in the fulneſs of time, that he who is the Son of the Father is made of a woman. The

SERM. L. Joh xii. 32, 33, 34. *Jews* objected against it, he had said, *If I be lifted up, I will draw all men to me. This he said signifying what death he should die. The people answer'd him, We have heard out of the law, that Christ abides for ever; and how sayest thou the Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?*

Are not such characters to be distributed under their proper heads? Don't they fully contradict one another, and must do so eternally if you would refer 'em to different natures? He came to a world that knew him not, tho' he had made it; nay, he came to his own, and they receiv'd him not, tho' he was the Lord whom they sought, and the messenger of the covenant in whom they delighted, Joh. i. 10, 11, 12, 13. But *to them that receiv'd him he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them who believ'd on his name*; that is, he gave 'em a new nature. Their believing in him, their receiving him was a thing given to them; for they were *born not of flesh, nor of the will of man, nor of blood, but of God; and the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us*, as a partaker of the same flesh with ourselves. They had seen him with their eyes, they had look'd upon him, as the Apostle saith in another of his writ- Joh. i. 1. ings, *Their hands handled the word of life:* not, as he was the word of life, but he submitted to an evidence that was thus familiar and sensible. And they beheld his glory; and what was that? *the glory of the only begotten of the Father. They* beheld it indeed, but others did not; and it was very needful they should not; for, as the Apostle argues, 1 Cor. ii. 8. Acts iii. 17. *Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory: Thro' ignorance they did it, as did also their rulers.*

You remember he charg'd the Devils that they should not make him known; nay, when he carried three disciples with him into the mount of transfiguration, and there came a voice to him from the

the excellent glory, he saith to 'em, *Tell the vision to no man*, till the Son of man be risen from the dead. And even before that, he had bound 'em with a caution, Whom do men say that I am? and by their answer it appears, that tho' they knew not what he was, yet they had a wonderful opinion of him, when they took him to be one rais'd from the dead; an old prophet, not only rais'd up by heaven, but sent down from it: *But whom do ye say* that I am? *Peter* saith, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* This they must ascribe to supernatural discoveries, *Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to thee, but my Father which is in heaven.* And yet, tho' he saith, *This is the rock upon which he will build his church*, he orders 'em *not to tell any man* that he was Jesus the Christ. What! must they tell no man now, what they were to tell all men afterwards? Shall the testimony that should be diffus'd among all nations be at present conceal'd from their own? yes, and the reason is this, *because the Son of man must be deliver'd into the hands of sinful men.* But now, SERM. L.

He as God is receiv'd into glory. He was *declar'd* to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead; not *made* the Son of God by that, but ὁρισθεὶς set in a proper light, brought into view. What the Psalmist speaks of God's *setting his King upon the holy hill of Sion*, in saying to him, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, the Apostle fixes to the resurrection, that this was the day the great God spoke of. He was call'd the only begotten of the Father long before that. 'Twas not the first time that he took the name himself, or was known by it among his people; but from that time he should be better known, not only in his mediatorial capacity, but in his infinite and eternal Nature. Rom. i. 4. Psal. ii. 6, 7. Acts xiii. 32, 33.

SERM L.

2. This obſcuring of the Divine Nature is over for ever: he is no more to ſuffer as a man, no more to be hid as a God: *When ye have lift up the Son of man, ye ſhall know that I am.* If the Goſpel that declares him *is hid, it's hid to them that are loſt:* for where the light of the glorious Goſpel ſhines, he appears to be *the image of the inviſible God*; that is, he ſhews himſelf to us under all the notions that we have of God, or otherwiſe he is not the image, unleſs you think the image makes one diſcovery, and the original another; that is, unleſs it's a falſe image. If Chriſt is not what the Father is, he cannot be *the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his Perſon.* For the brightneſs of the Father's glory in that place is not to be underſtood of an attribute, or a manifeſtation of that attribute; for if ſo, the creation, the Goſpel, the graces of his people are the brightneſs of his glory. But if this is a title given to a being, a perſon, a ſubſiſting agent, and if we are told theſe things of ſuch a one's nature, he cannot have the glory of that other, nor be himſelf the brightneſs of that glory, if he is inferior to him.

Joh. viii. 28.

2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

Heb. i. 2.

The expreſs image of any perſon denotes the ſame nature with that perſon, when we are ſpeaking of real and original characters. Thus for example, when it is ſaid, that God made man in his image and his likeneſs, it can ſignifie no more than a ſimilitude; that there was ſomething in that nature which had a reſemblance of the Divine. But when it is ſaid that *Adam* begat a ſon *in his own likeneſs, and after his image*, there the words muſt ſignifie a great deal more than a mere ſimilitude; for that ſon had the very nature that the father had, and the deſcription is on purpoſe to tell us, that they were both creatures of the ſame kind. This is obſerv'd in a nature which is not at all alter'd by ſucceſſion; there's no ſubordination of eſ-

Gen. v. 3.

ſence

fence between a father and a ſon, *i. e.* a ſon is as truly and fully of the human nature as a father. SERM. L.

Now the queſtion is, whether the Apoſtle, in ſaying that Chriſt is the expreſs image of his Perſon, means only what *Moſes* did, when he ſaith man was made in God's likeneſs? I think the words contain a great deal more, becauſe as ſoon as he had ſaid this, he immediately adds that which is peculiar to God, that *he upholds all things by the word of his power.* Tho' he deſigns to ſpeak of him in the mediatorial characters, yet he introduces them by thoſe that are antecedent to 'em.

God's *ſpeaking to us by his Son* muſt be underſtood of the Son as he was man. His appointing him to be *the heir of all things*, that is, to receive the glory of all things, makes his inheritance relate to him as a Mediator: But his *making the world by him* is the ſentence upon which the diſpute begins. The queſtion is, whether theſe words denote a nature that is equal to the Father, or one that is ſubordinate to him. Whatever be the meaning of that expreſſion, 'tis evident that from it the Apoſtle aſcends to conſider, not what Chriſt is as a creature or a Redeemer, but what he was in himſelf abſtracted from all his works: And then tells us, that *he is the brightneſs of his Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his Perſon.* This does not come in among any rewards beſtowed upon him. 'Tis not the recompence of his death; no, that's mentioned in theſe words, *He ſat down at the right hand of the Majeſty in high places.* Upholding all things, and doing it as a God does, *by the word of his power,* is conſider'd firſt, before he enters into the particulars of his merit, and the glory that aroſe out of it. This he did long before he took upon him our nature. And therefore,

As

SER M. L. As he has thrown off the vail under which he was for some time obscur'd, he never designs to take it on again. The human nature shall no more darken the Divine to the sons of men. They above shall *see him as he is*, see one like themselves united to a glory that no man has seen nor can see. He is at the same time confess'd to be the Lamb in the midst of the throne, and *the invisible God, who only has immortality, and dwells in the light that none can approach to.*

3. He may be said to be receiv'd into the glory of the Divine Nature, as he did afresh expose himself to the adoration of Angels. There were new orders issued out upon his resurrection, as the Apostle observes in a passage that I have often addrest'd to your thoughts: *When he brings the first begotten into the world he saith, And let all the Angels of God worship him.* Heb. i. 6.

The period of his bringing the first begotten into the world will be easily confess'd by all, to be either his birth or his resurrection. What's here affirm'd is true of both, but it seems more natural to understand it of the latter. For the words are ὅταν δὲ πάλιν εἰσαγάγῃ, when he brings him *again*, which he may be said to do from the time of his rising again, or his being reveal'd from heaven by the effusion of the spirit. Here I would desire your notice of two things.

First, That this is a quotation out of the Psalms, and therefore must carry the same sense here that it does there, or otherwise the Scripture is rather perverted than applied. You find it, *Ps.* xcvii. 7. *Worship him all ye gods.* Indeed you may observe here's an alteration in the words, which the Apostle would never have made, if it was absolutely needful to preserve the very sound of the letter. Nor would the holy Spirit have thrown such a reproach upon himself, in departing from the plain words

words of the old Teſtament by bringing 'em with any variation into the new. However, SERM. L.

Secondly, He who is call'd the firſt begotten is recommended to the worſhip of all the Angels of God; not only ſet *above* 'em, for that he might be as a creature, but plac'd *before* 'em as the object of their religious adoration. That the term of worſhip very often ſignifies no more than civil reſpect cannot be denied; but it muſt ſignifie in this place what it did in the Pſalms. The holy Spirit never runs into the impertinence of bringing out words, and leaving the ſenſe behind him, and therefore you ſhall have no human deciſion to determine the meaning of this paſſage; read it in the old Teſtament: *The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of iſles be glad thereof; clouds and darkneſs are round about him, righteouſneſs and judgment are the habitation of his throne; a fire goes before him, and burns up his enemies round about; his lightnings enlighten'd the world, the earth ſaw and trembled; the hills melted like wax at the preſence of the Lord, at the preſence of the Lord of the whole earth, the heavens declare his righteouſneſs, and all the people do ſee his glory. Confounded be all they that ſerve graven images, that boaſt themſelves of idols: worſhip him all ye gods.* The queſtion upon the whole paſſage is, whether it's to be underſtood of a ſupreme or a deriv'd God? I need only ſay, *Conſider of it, take advice, and ſpeak your minds.* Pſal. xvii. 1.—9.

SERMON

April 24. 1720.

SERMON LI.

SERM. LI.

OUR blessed Lord is receiv'd into the glory of the Divine Nature, inasmuch as from the time of his resurrection he speaks the language and uses all the prerogatives of God. We may suppose what he saith in heaven, by what he said when he was just going thither. He begun to put on majesty at the time when he was most to conceal it. He talks in the view of all his sufferings like a conqueror more than a captive. Having told his disciples, Joh. xvi. 32. *that the hour was come, that they should be scatter'd every one to his own, and leave him alone*, by which he describes the unhappy and shameful condition that he was thrown into; he runs immediately into another view of that same period; and *lifting up his* xvii. 1, 2. *eyes to heaven, he said, Father, the hour is come;* the same hour that he spake of to his Disciples, when they were so faint in their zeal and he in his strength, the hour of thick darkness that was to come upon him, the thing itself that he had prayed against, *Father, if it be possible save me from this hour, nevertheless for this cause came I to this hour.* 'Tis what he tells his enemies was *their hour*, and the power of darkness: and yet after all these melancholy things, he now speaks of it as *his own*, *The hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee;*

thee; as thou haſt given him power over all fleſh, that he may give eternal life to as many as thou haſt given him. Let him have a glory equal to his empire over the whole extent of all nature, and to his title as the fountain and finiſher of all grace.

'Tis plain from this language that he puts on the king, the ſovereign, at the time that he was going to be a ſacrifice. Though he appeared in his died garments, he was then *glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength, ſpeaking in righteouſneſs, and mighty to ſave.* In that very hour when the human nature was to be laid low he breaks thro' the clouds, by aſſerting the exiſtence, and claiming the privileges of another nature. He can ſcarce be ſaid to plead in the form of a ſervant, though he was juſt a going to give the moſt dreadful inſtance of his being ſo. Iſa. lxiii. 1, 2.

He was then upon the laſt and greateſt part of his obedience, that *unto death, even the death of the croſs*, and yet even then he ſpeaks the language of a GOD. What could the Diſciples think of his prayer when they ſaw him in that paſſive helpleſs way upon the croſs? How would they be able to reconcile the ſhame and ſcandal of his dying to what he ſaid of *a glory with the Father before the world was?* When they beheld his agonies, and heard the greateſt complaint that ever was utter'd, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* What harmony could there be between ſuch words and theſe that had lately flow'd out of his mouth, *Father, I will that they whom thou haſt given me be with me where I am, that they may behold the glory that thou haſt given me, for thou lovedſt me before the foundation of the world?* Joh. xvii. 24, 25.

This was not the language of a ſuffering nature. He ſpake not theſe things as a man, but as he ſaith in that very prayer, *Theſe things I ſpeak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themſelves.*

Though

SERM. LI. Though they were in a little time to see him under the wrath of God and scorn of sinners, they must understand *that* as no more than the atonement that was made in one nature; but all this while he had the unchangeable perfections of another.

There is something in this prayer, and especially in that part of it which I have lately given you, inconsistent with his character as a sufferer, and his dependence as a creature. When he consider'd and express'd himself in fashion as a man, no word so assuming came out of his mouth, as *Father I will*; no, he disclaim'd all authority as a subject; and *being made under the law* never placed himself in that
Heb. v. 7. nature above it. *I came not to do my own will, but his that sent me*; and when *in the days of his flesh, he offer'd up strong crying and supplications with prayers and tears*, he demands nothing, *not as I will, but as thou wilt.* 'Tis evident that in these words he talks within the limits of a creature and in the form of a servant: That, though he was the best of creatures, the beginning of the creation of God, the chief of servants in whom God would be glorify'd, yet still he claims no authority, *he learned obedience by the things that he suffer'd.* But

What a nature is that which changes the language, that always gave us so great an example of humility? Who is this, that, speaking of his people's happiness, saith, *Father, I will* have it so; tho' when he speaks of his own, 'tis no higher than, *not my will, but thine be done?* These parts in his carriage would be inconsistent if you did not understand them of two different natures. No creature ought to say what he does, because, whatever his merit might be, there's still an infinite distance between him and the most high God; and especially considering the thing it self that he demands, *That they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am,*

I am, that they may behold my glory. What? Shall one that durſt not inſiſt upon his own preſervation be thus poſitive about the diſpoſal of all his people? SERM. LI.

When the mother of *Zebedee*'s children came with a petition that her two ſons might ſit, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left in his kingdom, he tells her it *was not his to give.* As man he was ſo entirely ſubject, that he had no right to appoint a precedency in his Church. And this ſhews, that they who call themſelves his vicars and repreſentatives, go a great deal farther than ever their principal did. They that think themſelves empower'd to beſtow the chief places in a Redeemer's kingdom, aſſume a greatneſs that he himſelf never pretended to: for he tells this woman, who wanted to have her two ſons dignified and diſtinguiſhed, that it was not his to give, but it ſhould be given to them for whom it was prepared of his Father. And yet here he talks quite otherwiſe: "A precedence in the church below "is not mine to give as a man, but eternal life is "mine to give: I have a right to beſtow all that. "And how can this be allowed in one that is not "God? I muſt leave it to the Father to fill theſe "two places at my right and left hand in my king-"dom, becauſe in this human nature he is greater "than I. But I can tell even the Father him-"ſelf, that *I will* have all my people with me in "heaven.

Certainly one that ſpoke after this manner, *thought it no robbery to make himſelf equal with God.* And what will he have them there for? *To behold the glory that thou haſt given me*; and leſt we ſhould look upon this as no other than the glory of his reward as a Mediator, he adds, *For thou lovedſt me before the foundation of the world.* "The glory "I ſpeak of is that which conſiſts in thy love;

"This

SERM. LI

" This love I enjoyed eternally before any of the " duty that I have now gone through. Besides " a glory that is given as a recompence to my " actions, I had one with thee in person before " the world was; and the glory that arises from " this, is what I would have them behold in " heaven." So that if you invert this whole passage, there are three things contained in it.

First, That the Father had a love to the Son before the foundation of the world, antecedent to the obedience that he threw himself into. *Secondly*, That this love is the ground, the matter, the conveyance and perfection of his chief glory. Tho' the human nature is advanc'd and highly exalted, yet the glory that he had before the world was, is the main inheritance, and what he would have his people behold; and this they will find is comprehended in an eternal love. And, *Thirdly*, This glory is so great, that he sets his throne as the throne of God. He speaks the language of the most High, and that not only to the world, but to the Father himself. He uses words that conceal every thing of a subordination. When the Father speaks to him, it's in these terms, *To the Son, he saith, thy throne O God, is for ever and ever.* When he speaks to the Father, he claims the same equality, that the Father in speaking to him had own'd, *I will*, that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am.

Thus has the Scripture declared him to be above every name in heaven. We read that *the throne of God, and the Lamb* is there. Glory is ascrib'd to him that sits upon the throne and to the Lamb for ever. Can we think that an inferior nature shall have equal praises? Indeed, if the distinction of supreme and subordinate worship had come from heaven, we might have carried it thither again. But these are no words that the holy Ghost teaches;

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no worſhip at all is allow'd in that ſtate but what is given to the moſt High, if we may judge of what they do in the city, by the account we have from one who ſaw the beſt repreſentation of it; I mean the Apoſtle *John*; he would needs have fallen down at the feet of the Angel to *worſhip him*. No manner of doubt he meant no more than a ſubordinate worſhip; there's no room to imagine that he look'd upon this Angel as a God; and yet the anſwer is, *See thou do it not, for I am of thy brethren, worſhip thou God.* The force of what he ſaith lies in this, "The worſhip thou oweſt to "*God* is ſo great and comprehenſive, that *we* muſt "not have it even in a lower degree. Every crea- "ture here is thy fellow-ſervant.

SERM. LI.

Rev. xxii. 10.

Chriſt himſelf, as a man, is one of our brethren. If an Angel, becauſe he's one of our brethren, is not to be worſhip'd at all, then he who is the firſt-born among many brethren has no claim to it; and it is certain he has not in that relation; but yet it is equally evident, that the praiſes given up to the Father are, in the ſame language, offer'd to him, which makes it needful for us to conceive of him as infinitely more than a Mediator, and that is, *over all God bleſſed for ever.*

5. He may be ſaid to be received into the glory of the Divine Nature in the church upon earth, becauſe he reveals himſelf to his people in this world as the moſt high God. This is a doctrine that I hope you have already heard in the evidence of it thro' ſeveral diſcourſes, and therefore I have no need to enlarge upon it again.

I have ſhewn that he could not be *juſtified in the Spirit* if he was not God. 'Tis beneath the eternal Spirit to come down from heaven, and lay out all his teſtimony to the honour of a creature. No, when he glorifies Chriſt, he does it by taking the things of Chriſt, and ſhewing them to us, *i. e.*

SERM. LI. letting us know what he is: and what are the things that he thus discovers? No less than the whole treasure of the Divine Nature. *All that the Father has is mine, and therefore I said, he shall take of mine and shew it unto you.*

Joh. xvi. 17.

He could not be *preached unto the Gentiles* if he was not God. The great subject of our ministry is more than a creature. We dare not call people from their dumb idols to trust in a Saviour, if he was not *the living God.* Nor is he *believed on in the world* under any other notion; believing that he was an extraordinary prophet is no more than believing that he had a miraculous birth; neither of these is believing in him, or resting our souls upon him for salvation.

If an Angel was to come down into our nature, he might be produced in a glorious manner, and would be furnish'd with great qualifications, and I could believe all that was said of him; but this falls vastly short of believing *in him.* I can commit the keeping of my soul to none but *a faithful Creator.* Any of the inhabitants above may be the messenger of glad tydings, but it requires a nature greater than was ever created to be the *author of eternal salvation. David* thought so, when he said, *Into thy hand I commit my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.* And *Stephen* meant no less in the last cry of his faith, *Lord Jesus receive my spirit.*

Psal. xxxi. 5.

Act. vii. 59.

Thus is he revealed *unto us,* but how is he revealed *in us?* for that's the expression that the Apostle uses when he speaks of practical religion, *it pleased God to reveal his Son in me.* As this is a word which man's wisdom never taught, so it belongs to a thing that man's wisdom never felt, and what no hypocrite has been acquainted with.

Gal. i. 12.

Our

SERM. LI.

Our Lord told the disciples, *I am with you always to the end of the world*; that relates to their work in general; in particular, he says, *Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst of them:* Not in a bodily presence, or visible representation, but in such a manner as shews his divine glory. *The new Jerusalem*, the Gospel church *comes down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorn'd for her husband:* Upon which there was *a great voice out of heaven, behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God.* Who is this God? He that spoke afterwards, and *said it is done, I am alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely: He that overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his* GOD, *and he shall be my Son.* 'Tis he who has his tabernacle with men.

Matth. xxviii. 20. xviii. 20. Rev. xxi. 2, 3. 6, 7.

Thus converted sinners have found it. If a man that is unlearned or ignorant comes into your assemblies, and *the secrets of his heart are made manifest, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all* Christ Jesus whom he once despis'd has laid him open to himself; and what's the consequence of this change? *He falls on his face and worships God, and confesses that* GOD *is among you of a truth.* What he saith gives no testimony to Christ's being among 'em, or the truth of that religion which he did not understand before, unless you will make his saying, *God is among you*, to tally with our Saviour's promise, when two or three are met in my name, *I am* in the midst of 'em.

1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25.

We read of *God's raising him from the dead*, which must be understood of his human nature. The Divinity could not die, and was not buried. *Setting him at his own right hand far above all principa-*

Eph. i. 20. 21, 22.

SERM. LI.

lities and powers, you must refer to his office as Mediator. *He is made head over all things to the church, the fulness of him that fills all in all.* A head of *authority* he may be by constitution, but his being a head *of influence* supposes a nature agreeable to what shall be done by him, and that is to *quicken those who are dead in trespasses and sins.*

Eph. ii. 1.

'Tis all one to the argument, whether these last words are to be understood of the Son or of the Father. If we may apply 'em to the Son, that it's he who converts the soul, then the proof is made at once; and if this is mentioned as an act of the Father, 'tis that we may conceive of it as the greatest work of God. Now, it's no more than we read of our Saviour in other places, *That as the Father quickens the dead, and raises them, even so the Son quickens whom he will:* It is *he who sanctifies*, he is the *Author* and will be the *Finisher* of our *faith.*

Heb. ii. 10. xii. 2.

Thus have I considered the manner of our Lord's coming by this glory, or how we are to apprehend his being RECEIV'D into it, in his lower nature as *man*, in his office as *Mediator*, and, lastly, as he is in the form of *God.* I will give you an application of this part of my subject, before I pass on to another.

(1.) If he was thus received into glory, then you may be very well assur'd, he will never lose that glory: *He sits at God's right hand, till all his enemies are made his footstool.* And this is a perpetual honour as the Apostle observes in his quotation of that passage, *After he had offered one sacrifice for sin, he* FOR EVER *sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.*

Psal. cx. 1. Heb. x. 12, 13.

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You must not conclude from these things, that there will be no opposition made to him; for as *the God of this world* is his great antagonist, so his way of pushing on the war is by *blinding the eyes of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ who is the image of the invisible God should shine into their hearts.* Satan's own eyes are open enough, he knows him who he is, (as he has often confess'd) *the holy One of God*; and therefore as he can never succeed upon himself in contradicting the Divinity of a Saviour, he throws the rebellion into another form, and has his tools in an unbelieving world. His influence upon them they may apprehend does only lead them into the acts of *free thinking*, but it is indeed *blinding* their eyes. It's no matter what splendid names they may give to this temper, when the Father of lights himself has called it a blindness. Jesus himself has said, *For judgment am I come into this world, that they that see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind.* Thus *Esaias* had said before, *He has blinded their eyes, and hardned their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted.*

SERM. LI.

2 Cor. iv. 4, 5.

Joh. ix. 39.

xii. 40.

We read of great men that are engaged against him, but all this while *the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing,* when *the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his Anointed.* The Apostles gave a twofold interpretation of this passage. *First,* It was true personally, referring it all to the malice of men against our blessed Lord himself. *The heathen raged,* and the people, that is the *Jews,* imagined a vain thing; *For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast ordained, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel have joined together to do those things which thou hast determined should be done.*

Psal. ii. 1, 2.

Act. iv. 24, &c. 27, 28.

SERM. LI. 29, 30.

Secondly, They take the ſenſe of the prophecy to be extended farther, and believed themſelves included in the deſign of theſe words. *Now, Lord, behold their threatnings, and grant unto thy ſervants that with all boldneſs they may preach thy word*; and they did not only pray for this mercy, but were confirmed in their belief of it; for this they could reſt themſelves upon the words of *David*, that *he who ſits in the heavens ſhall laugh, the Lord ſhall have 'em in deriſion*; *yet have I ſet my King upon my holy hill of Sion.* He laughs at their rage, he ſees it's a vain thing that they imagine, and notwithſtanding all their oppoſition the Father will maintain his own appointment in theſe two particulars with reſpect to a Saviour.

1. In his ſole authority over his church.
2. In the full and proper Divinity of his Perſon.

Theſe are things that he has eſtabliſh'd. Chriſt is not only exalted in heaven above all the injury that their unbelief and malice would do him, but they ſhall not be able to carry their point upon earth.

1. One thing which he that ſits in the heavens will ſecure is the authority of a Redeemer over his churches. *I have ſet my King upon my holy hill of Sion.* And this is not only true in fact, but he has rais'd up witneſſes to own it. Tho' theſe are oftentimes *cloath'd in ſackcloth*, nay, more than that, have their veſtures like his, *dipp'd in blood, yet they overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their teſtimony, and they love not their lives unto the death.* If cruelty and fraud could have rooted this principle out of the earth, it had ſwum away in the rivers of innocent blood that have been ſhed in the defence of it. We ſhould have loſt it with our martyrs, ſeen it kill'd at their execution,

Rev. xii. 11.

on, and buried in their graves: But it is ſtill alive; upon that our *God has founded Sion, and the poor of his people ſhall truſt in it.* SERM. LI. Iſa. xiv. ult.

No manner of doubt, when perſecution brings us under a ſcrutiny, many thouſands will rather give up the truth than give up themſelves, and will ſcarce be proteſtants at the ſtake, though they are well paid for being ſo in the church. But I make no queſtion, that when all the greatneſs and the eſtabliſhments of this world turn againſt the doctrines of religion, the God of grace will raiſe up ſome to aſſert the Goſpel without a human law, which they have honeſtly profeſs'd with one. With ſuch a ſpirit was the proteſtant religion ſpread over the nations. They tore the name of Chriſt out of the hands of the man of ſin, who pretends to repreſent him. The Lord *conſum'd him with the breath of his mouth, and deſtroyed him with the brightneſs of his coming.*

2. Another thing that the great God will not give up is the doctrine of our Lord's Divinity. Who is this King upon the holy hill of *Sion?* Or rather, let's firſt enquire what is meant by *Sion* it ſelf. Certainly not the hill which is now plough'd as a field, and made as the high places of the foreſt, but the church of the new Teſtament, the *mount Sion which is the city of the living God:* and who is the *King* exalted there, but he that ſuffered in view of the former Sion? Now it is ſaid, that *the Lord ſhall reign for ever, even thy God, O Sion, to all generations.* He that is exalted upon this hill is *Jehovah, whoſe kingdom is an everlaſting kingdom,* and who is alſo the God of his people. Thus, Sion that publiſh'd glad tydings about the Meſſiah, ſpeaks of him in this language, *Saying to the cities of Judah, behold your God.* Heb. xii. 19. Pſal. cxlvi. 10. Iſa. xl. 10.

And indeed the Pſalmiſt having introduced the Father as giving out that reſolution, I have ſet

SERM. LI my King upon my holy hill, brings in the Son as replying to it, or rather enlarging upon it, *I will declare the decree, the Lord has said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* The season that this refers to, the time of Christ's making the declaration, the Apostle tells us was his resurrection. The decree it self is, that the Lord saith to him, *Thou art my Son,* not that the relation begun then, but the meaning is, that from this time it shall be own'd; he would shew him afresh to the world; and as the resurrection it self is an evidence by which he was *declared to be the Son of God with power,* so the sending down of the Spirit afterwards was to carry the testimony into the hearts of men; and therefore all our owning him to be King upon his holy hill of Sion amounts to little without a confession of this as the most important doctrine, that he is *the Son of God.*

We are not merely contesting with the *Jews,* whether *Moses* or *Jesus* shall be head of the Church, *i. e.* whether this person, or that, shall give us laws; but the question is, whether he, who is the head of the church, is a creature or a God: Now the decree which he declares, and they that are faithful will never shun to declare, relates to his Divine Nature.

That he is called the Son of God because of his miraculous birth; his great qualifications and purity is true enough, but this falls short of the *decree.* If that was all that he meant by it, the name might have been given to the Angels, and the Apostle could not have bore up with his challenge, *To which of the Angels said he at any time, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?* They are called the sons of God, and though it's true, they are not rais'd from the dead, yet if the day of resurrection would have been the day of his declaring them begotten, 'tis what all the saints shall have. But

But it's plain, that the title of *Son* here is to be taken as it is every where elſe, when we uſe it properly to expreſs a ſameneſs of nature with the Father. Angels and men are only called the ſons of God by a figure; and though it is ſaid *of his own will has he begotten us by the word of truth*, 'tis to be underſtood with a limitation. But when the higheſt name that God gives to our bleſſed Saviour is calling him *his Son*, the generation he ſpeaks of is not to denote any period when it was done, but an equality of exiſtence, or otherwiſe the words Father and Son muſt be made to ſignify in the Divine Nature what they never do in the human, two different ſorts of being. SERM LI. Jam. i. 17.

(2.) If he is thus received into glory, let it be an argument for receiving him into your own ſouls. Admire the condeſcenſion that ſhines through thoſe words, *Behold I ſtand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice and open unto me, I will come in and ſup with him, and he with me.* O ſinners! will you reject him who delivers his importunity from a throne? He begs admittance into your hearts ever ſince he has laid aſide the form of a ſervant. Cry out as *Thomas* did, *My Lord, and my God!* Rev. iii. 20.

(3.) Conſider the happineſs of as many as receiv'd him, *To them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.* I will mention but two things in a way of exhortation and comfort. Joh. i. 14.

Firſt, Take care that you do not let him go either in doctrine or practice. *Jeſus Chriſt is the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever*; and therefore, *be not carried about with divers and ſtrange doctrines.* You have heard of his perfections; 'tis not enough that you admire thoſe of his human nature, the princes of this world own'd all that, and it was pure ignorance of other things that *made 'em crucify the* Heb. xiii. 8, 9.

SERM. LI. *Lord of glory.* If you give up his Divinity, you will be but empty professors of him, and he but an empty Saviour to you. As it's a God whom you are contending for, so he can be no less whom you depend upon. He that is able to keep what
Jude 24. you have committed to him, *able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before his own glory with exceeding joy, is the only wise God our Saviour.* Know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. This is your crown, and take heed lest any man run away with it. He that saves your souls, he that will raise your bodies must have
Phil. iii. 21. a power by which he is *able to subdue all things to himself.*

Secondly, Support your selves with the hope of being received where he is. Then you will behold the glory that some deny with rage and confidence, foaming out their own shame, and which is always own'd to be unspeakable. 'Tis the matter of our testimony upon earth. We believe, and are sure, that he had a glory with the Father before the world was; but what this is, is a question that overwhelms us all at once; however, the day is coming, when we shall know,
Joh. xiv. 20. *That he is in the Father, and the Father in him, and he in us.*

SER-

SERMON LII.

May 8. 1720.

SERM. LII.

THE ſecond general head which I have always given you under every branch of this great ſubject, was to open what we have been inſiſting on as an argument of our Lord's Divinity; and therefore by the rules of method that I have all along obſerved, I muſt now have ſhewn you, that as *God* was manifeſt in the fleſh, juſtified in the Spirit, ſeen of Angels, preached unto the *Gentiles*, and believ'd on in the world; ſo it is no other than the ſame living and true God who is *received up into glory*. But a ſmall return of thought upon what you have heard will ſhew you that this deſign is already anſwer'd: for I have in ſeveral particulars fairly prov'd, that the glory which Jeſus Chriſt is now poſſeſſed of, is the peculiar of the Divine Nature, and that many things which the Scripture ſaith of him could not be laid down with either modeſty or juſtice if he was not the moſt high God.

This argument I have drawn thro' the particular attributes of ſpirituality, omniſcience, almightineſs, omnipreſence, and eternity; the creation that he has wrought, and the worſhip that he receives. You have heard at large, that theſe things are never ſaid of a creature, that God has always claim'd them as his own, and has frequently told us, that they ſhall not be given to another; that if ſuch

characters

SERM. LII. characters don't belong to him alone, we have no notion left under which to conceive of a God; all diſtinctions are thrown down and laid open, that he has eſtabliſhed between himſelf and his creatures. If another being has a power that's almighty, and an underſtanding that's infinite; if he can fill the heaven and the earth, if he is unchangeable in his nature, and receives the higheſt expreſſions of homage; I ſay, if any one can have theſe things affirm'd of him, and yet not be God, we are at a loſs to know what God is, and have not one character left for him which may not be given to another.

And yet in the fulleſt manner, with terms unlimited and undiſguis'd, are theſe divine perfections reveal'd as belonging to the great Redeemer. Thus the holy Spirit has declared him, thus his people in every age have received him. *Thomas* calls him *his Lord, and his God*, and ſo muſt we, if we are of thoſe bleſſed ones that have not ſeen, and yet have believed. *Theſe things are written, that we might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt the Son of God, and that believing we might have life thro' his name.* This is the truth they have witneſſed to, this is the food they lived upon, and the good doctrine they were nouriſh'd with.

Joh. xx. 28, 29, 31.

I have given you the arguments juſt as I have found them, propoſing this great article in no other light than that of plain Scripture, comparing ſpiritual things with ſpiritual. Had the arguments been charged with inſufficiency, I ſhould gladly have attended to any thing that might prove it. But when inſtead of fair anſwers, the whole work is called *enthuſiaſm*, you may be ſure the victory is gain'd; for that's always the laſt refuge of a baffled enemy, who goes off the field, running and railing, and rather than not be inſolent grows profane, *Turning aſide to vain jangling, underſtanding neither*

1 Tim. i. 6, 7.

SERM. LII.

neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. They speak evil of the things they understand not, and shall utterly perish in their own corruption, counting it pleasure to riot in the day time, spots and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings. 2 Pet. ii. 12, 13. On these accounts I'm prevented of considering this branch of our religion in the way that I have taken with all the rest; for, having in the first part of my work, proved that the glory of Christ is a glory that he had in communion with the Father, and in full equality to him, I would not enter upon that argument again.

I shall therefore pursue this proof another way, by considering what is offered against it. By the faithful word *we are to exhort and convince the gainsayers, the unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, whose mouths must be stopped, because they subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not.* Tit. i. 9, 10, 11. That an opposition is made to this glorious doctrine can hardly be denied by any of us. *Do they not blaspheme that worthy name by which you are called?* Jam. ii. 7. If you have not heard the arguments yet you have *heard the slander of many.*

The defamation that flies at large, *the trial of cruel mockings* cannot be for our subscribing what we believe, but for believing what we subscribe: Could we have been content to stab the doctrine with the very pen that sign'd it, we might have gone untouch'd in our reputation. If they could once make us ashamed of our glory, they had soon brought us to *glory in our shame.* But it is for the sake of Christ that men separate us from their company, and *cast out our names as evil.* And we are taught what to do in such a day, to *rejoice and be exceeding glad, for the great reward that's laid up in heaven.* Phil. i. 27, 28, 29. However, let us *stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel, in nothing terrified by our adversaries;*

SERM. LII. *ſaries; which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to us of ſalvation, and that of God: For to us it is given in the behalf of Chriſt, not only to believe in his name, but to ſuffer for his ſake.* I ſhall do theſe three things.

1. Give you ſome account of the *oppoſition* that is made to this doctrine of Chriſt's Divinity.

2. The *Reaſons* that are pleaded for the opinion.

3. The *ways* that are taken to promote the cauſe.

1. The oppoſition that's made to our Lord's Divinity has been various; truth, like the ſun, has kept its place for ſeveral ages; the faith delivered to the ſaints is the faith that's yet admired by the ſaints. They are *built upon the foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner ſtone.* But error keeps wheeling round, carrying on the ſame deſign through all forms and ſhapes. The corruptions in doctrine are uſually called after the people that ſpread them in the world; and all theſe names have been taken up, as God foretold, *for a curſe among his choſen.* The men that perverted the truth made a little rumbling in the church for a while, but as *their root was rottenneſs,* ſo *their bloſſom went up as duſt.*

Samoſatenus was one of this wretched number a long while ago; a man of a moſt vicious life, who having denied the Lord that bought him in practice, as a bubble to his conſcience, did it afterwards in doctrine. His notions were very little different from thoſe that the two *Socinus*'s, the uncle and the nephew, reviv'd a great many ages after, by which they blaſted the reformation in *Poland,* and, with reſpect to the proteſtant faith, *turn'd a fruitful land into barrenneſs.* Theſe aſſert that Chriſt is no more than a man divinely inſpired, and deny that he had any exiſtence before that in the womb of the Virgin *Mary.* I do not find that their notion goes any higher than what the Apoſtle tells

us his very enemies had of him; *Ye men of Israel, Je-*SERM. LII.
sus of Nazareth was a man approved of God among you by signs, and miracles, and wonders, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye your selves also know. Act. ii. 22.

Others have carried on their quarrel with the truth in a different way. These were those call'd *Aetians* and *Eunomians*, who said God might be comprehended by us (as if they were resolv'd to set out with impudence enough) and that the Son was altogether unlike the Father in being, power and will, and that the Spirit was created by the Son; that Christ did not take to him a human soul, but only a body.

These were also the opinions of the *Arians*, tho' they spake with a greater veneration for the dignity of the Son than the other had learned to do, calling him the best and most glorious creature. The *Ebionites* were much earlier than these that I have mentioned, but held almost the same opinions with those that make up the *Socinian* system.

The *Macedonians* seem to be only the dregs of the *Arians* about the year three hundred and twelve. Their boasted opinion was, that the Son is not of the same essence with the Father, but only like him. Besides these we read of the *Noetians*, the *Praxeans*, and the *Sabellians*, who made the names of Father, Son, and holy Ghost, to be no more than three different characters and representations of God; so that when we consider him as a Creator he is to be called the Father, as a Redeemer the Son, and as a Comforter the holy Ghost. These denied the *Persons* as the other did the *Nature*: Hence they asserted, that the Father was born, suffered upon the cross, and rose again from the dead; for which they were called *Patripassians*.

As

SERM. LII. As theſe perſons were very confus'd in their opinions, they could be no leſs in their practice. The *Arians* ſpake of Chriſt with more reſpect than thoſe that went before them, but denied him to be the proper object of worſhip. The *Samoſatinians* would not baptize in his name. The *Socinians*, though they conceiv'd of him in the ſame manner, nevertheleſs declared that divine adoration ſhould be paid to him. This very difference was the thing that ſplit the antitrinitarian intereſt in *Poland*, and you may be ſure it will have the ſame fate in *England*, when the hot humour that now breaks out againſt the truth is ſtruck inwards, as it ſeldoms fails to do in a little time.

At preſent we have a ſcheme advanced that would ſeem to be different from all thoſe that I have mentioned; but if you enquire into it, you will find it diſtinguiſhed from *Arianiſm* by nothing elſe but cowardice and confuſion: That is, if it is not *Arianiſm*, it's nonſenſe. Thus a certain author in our days has delivered his thoughts in theſe propoſitions.

That "with the Father, who is the firſt and ſu-
"preme cauſe, there has exiſted from the begin-
"ning a ſecond perſon who is his Word and Son;
"and with the Father and Son there has exiſted
"from the beginning a third divine perſon who is
"the Spirit of the Father and the Son. That the
"Father alone is ſelf-exiſtent, underived, unorigi-
"nated, and independent. That the Father is the
"ſole original of all power and authority, and is
"the author and principle of whatever is done by
"the Son or by the Spirit; and that the Scripture,
"when it mentions the one God, or the only God,
"always means the ſupreme perſon of the Father.
"That the Son, or ſecond perſon is not ſelf-ex-
"iſtent, but derives his being, or eſſence, and all
"his attributes from the Father, as from the ſu-
"preme cauſe.

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In the next proposition he distinguishes himself both from the *Arians*, and from those that I hope we may be yet allowed to call *Orthodox*. "They, "saith he, are worthy of censure, who either on "one hand presume to affirm that the Son was "made ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων out of nothing, or on the other "hand, that he is a self-existent being." And the ground of this critical peculiar he lays down thus, "That the Scripture in declaring the Son's deri- "vation from the Father never makes mention of "any limitation of time, but always supposes "and affirms him to have existed with the Father "from the beginning, and before all worlds. They "are also justly to be censur'd, who, presuming to "be *wise above what is written*, and intrude into "things which they have not seen, presume to "affirm, that there was a time when the Son "was not.

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Thus have I laid before you what is usually called *the new scheme* in the very words of the man that has drawn it. I hope you have heard so much of the Deity of our blessed Lord in a long train of discourses, as will convince you 'tis not a thing to be distinguished away into some uncertain medium between a God and a creature. I would observe two things upon all these propositions.

First, That they are far from being deliver'd in Scripture words. I believe there never was a creed or catechism in the universe that did more positively determine the sense of the Bible with less use of the *language*; and therefore it's cutting us both ways, that this is admir'd as *Scripture-doctrine* by the very people that talk so much against *Scripture-consequences*. Tho' perhaps one may find an excuse for that management; for indeed I cannot take these propositions to be *Scripture-consequences*, as has been abundantly shewn by several, whose praises are in all the churches of Christ, and

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will, I doubt not, farther appear from different quarters, as we come to be daily taken off from our lower debates, and driven to ſecure the foundation.

Secondly, I may farther obſerve from this man, and his communication, that it's a hard thing to eſcape his cenſures. His charity has pitch'd itſelf in a point, and we loſe it, if we take one ſtep beyond the narroweſt notion that ever was advanc'd in the world. *They are to be cenſur'd* who ſay the Son is a creature, and they are to be cenſur'd who ſay he is a God; and what then muſt become of all the world, who till now never imagin'd there was any medium between theſe two? We muſt not be allow'd to ſay he had a beginning, or that *there was a time when he was not*, nor muſt we call him eternal. Reaſon and Scripture, philoſophy and revelation, the light of nature itſelf, have always taught us to ſay, that there was one ſupreme cauſe, and every being is either that firſt being, or made by him. If he was made, there muſt be ſome moment of time when he was not made. Every thing, but that individual firſt cauſe, had a beginning; no exiſtence could be eternal but what was neceſſary.

Did ever any learning talk againſt theſe maxims? Well may that be call'd a NEW SCHEME that deſtroys all the principles that are as old as human nature. And how bold is it to *cenſure men* for not coming into an opinion that's flat folly to univerſal reaſon? That a Being may be neither made nor unmade, neither have a beginning, nor be without beginning? neither be a God nor a creature? derive from another, and yet be coeternal with that other?

No wonder that we read ſo much againſt a *certainty* in matters of *faith*; for this is the way to loſe it in matters of *reaſon*. Was there ever any myſtery ſo inconceivable

inconceivable as this heap of thoughts? Cannot as soon believe that three are one, as that any thing can *be* and *not be?* Can there be in any doctrine of the christian religion a more horrible jarr, than to talk of a deriv'd God, an originated eternal essence? SERM. LII.

You see what a wilderness we are thrown into, a wide and howling wilderness, when we leave the right ways of the Lord. I believe verily that the *Arian* scheme is never the more agreeable to Scripture than this; but I'm sure it's more agreeable to sense. These people are fairer adversaries than such as send out their opinions in masquerade. The *Arians* are *censur'd* by their younger brethren for speaking out, and acting in open day-light. And tho' *they* made a terrible slaughter in the peace of the churches, yet nothing is so frightful to an honest man, as *a pestilence that walks in darkness*, that we suck in without seeing it.

Others have lighted their candles at this author's; but as they do not write with his caution, it will be very hard for them to keep clear of his censure. We are told by one, "that the Word, or "the λόγος was an intelligent Agent or Being di- "stinct from the one God the Father. And that "to assert that he was the same Being with the "Father, is to assert that he was the Father." And again, "That Christ is not represented in the "Scripture as equal to God, and that the same "absolute perfections are not ascrib'd to Christ "which are to the Father.

I hope the contrary to this has appear'd from such a collection of Scriptures as all the adversaries in the world will not be able to gainsay or resist. And yet this person in another of his propositions tells us, "Christ is to be worship'd." The very thing which another of 'em exclaims against, and storms in a question, "What shall we

SERM. LII. "ſay in the great day of account, when we are "accus'd under pretence of honouring the Son, of "giving him the honour that is only due to the "Father?" That which the one makes dutiful, the other makes tremendous. The one ſaith, we are not Chriſtians without it in this world, the other ſaith, we ſhall be condemn'd for it in another.

What a ſtrait is a ſerious perſon drawn into by the claſhing of two authors who both write for the ſame cauſe? There's not ſuch a venture for a poor ſoul in this caſe, as there was for the lepers at the gate of *Samaria*. They knew if they went into the city they ſhould die with famine, if they ſtaid on the outſide they muſt die with waiting; but they had a *third way* for it. Now, here faith is hung in ſuſpenſe in the greateſt doctrine, whether Chriſt is God or creature; and it muſt be ſo in a continual practice, whether he is to be worſhip'd or no. Having firſt determin'd that we worſhip we know not what, they at laſt leave us undetermin'd whether there ſhould be any worſhip or no.

He that's againſt the worſhip of Chriſt *calls* it idolatry, and he that's for it *proves* it ſo; for his next propoſition is this, "That Jeſus Chriſt in "both natures, and not in one only, is to be con-"ſider'd as the object of that worſhip which "Chriſtians are to pay him.

This is deſtroying natural and reveal'd religion together. The human nature of Chriſt never receiv'd any worſhip. Chriſtianity has not advanc'd any thing ſo monſtrous as an oppoſition to the firſt principle of all religion: *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.* This is one of our beſt arguments againſt the ſuperſtition of the *Papiſts*; the ſplutter they make with crucifixes and tranſubſtantiation; for if

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the body of Christ was really there, they ought not to adore it. But these *new schemes* will bring us into our old abominations; and by breaking the bonds of a Divine authority asunder they prepare us for a return under that yoke, that *neither we nor our fathers were able to bear.*

Another proposition of this author's, which he gives as the ground of what I have now consider'd, is but a broken reed to it. He saith, that "the grand reason the Scripture gives why we are "to worship the Son, is because the Father has "appointed us so to do, and has given him a right "to our worship.

But did the Father ever appoint us to worship a creature? Has he not both in the old and new Testament challeng'd all religious worship to himself, always professing that *he will not give his glory to another?* Has he chang'd his mind after so many oaths? for *he has sworn by himself, and the word is come out of his mouth in righteousness.* But besides, has he made the human nature of Christ capable of our worship? Worship is an inward act of the soul, the employment of our faith, fear and hope upon certain objects; and this is often express'd in the duty of prayer, calling upon such a one, drawing nigh to him, and depending there, with an adoring esteem of his perfections; knowing that he is able and willing to help me. Now, this can never be said of any person, or any nature that is not omnipresent; and therefore if the human nature of Christ is not so present with me on earth, as I believe the Divine is, I worship it in vain. Isa. xlv. 23.

The Scripture has given me no room for such filthy folly as this is. I know that it is in heaven, and we cannot part with it from thence: 'tis always *before* the throne, as the Divine is always *upon* it; and therefore to worship this nature, is to call upon that which is not omniscient, and so can-

SERM. LII. not hear me; nor omnipotent, and ſo cannot help me.

Thus do men talk at random about the greateſt things that ever the world had a concern in; what they are to *think*, and what they are to *do*. The *Heathen* are charg'd with ſerving thoſe who by nature are no gods; and we have our dependence upon One who by nature is not ſo, but only by office. Or, if he is call'd a God, we are told that he has not what agrees with every man's notion of the ſupreme God, that he is *not ſelf-exiſtent*.

I am ſorry to find ſo dangerous an expreſſion in a book call'd, *Self-dedication perſonal and ſacramental*, where we are exhorted to "truſt the Lord "Jeſus Chriſt with our ſouls, and to pray to him "as the object of worſhip, and fountain of "good." But I fear what follows will rather ſhock the faith of a Chriſtian than direct it. "It's "true, ſaith the author, as if he was afraid his readers ſhould overdo it in their duty to Chriſt, "He is the begotten of the Father, and ſent of the "Father, and the Father is greater than he, and "the head of Chriſt is God. The Son derives of "the Father, and is not properly ſelf-exiſtent." And it makes the matter ſtill worſe; for thoſe paſſages out of the *Athanaſian* and *Nicene* Creeds to be thrown into the margin as a defence of this notion that have been always underſtood for an oppoſition to it.

To talk of one that is eternal God *deriving* from another, is to throw out a vile contradiction. If it's to be underſtood of his mediation or his office as a ſervant, thoſe places of Scripture are eaſie enough, that *the Father is greater than he, and the head of Chriſt is God*. But a deriving Deity, or that He who gives exiſtence to all other things, ſhould not be *ſelf-exiſtent*, that He by whom all the creation conſiſts, ſhould himſelf be dependent, what a confuſion is this to reaſon, what a cruſh to faith?

I shall only mention one person more who has openly told us, that "the commonly receiv'd opi- "nion about the Trinity has its best advocates a- "mong the Jesuits." In a book, which, accord- ing to his notorious modesty, he call'd, *The western inquisition*, he has given us this confession of his faith, "I am not of the opinion of *Sabellius*, *Arius*, *Socinus*, "or *Sherlock*, I believe there is but one God, and "can be no more; I believe the Son and holy "Ghost to be Divine Persons, but subordinate to "the Father; and the Unity of the Godhead I "think to be resolv'd into the Father's being the "fountain of the Divinity of the Son and Spi- "rit. SERM. LII.

I shall in the next discourse lay before you the *arguments* they give for their opinions, and some accounts of the *methods* they take to promote 'em. And as I think the former will never convince a man that's *serious*, I'm sure the latter will never be endur'd by one that's *honest*. I will dismiss you at present with this one reflection upon what is offer'd against that good confession, "that there are "three Persons in the Godhead, the Father, the "Son, and the holy Ghost; and these three are "one God, the same in substance, equal in power "and glory;

That this has been always receiv'd wherever the *Christian* religion broke out in its full light, and wherever the *Protestant* cause reviv'd it, is beyond dispute. In the truth of this faith our fathers liv'd, in the joys of it they died; and therefore what Jesus and holy Spirit are we now call'd to? *Gods whom ye knew not, new gods newly come up, whom your fathers fear'd not. Of the rock that begat us* we are growing unmindful, and have *forgot the God that form'd us*. And is our religion so trifling, that we shall lose it in our sleep, or change it for a dream? no, *let us continue in the things that we have* Deu. xxxii. 17, 18. 2 Tim. iii. 14.

have known and been assur'd of, knowing of whom we have learnt 'em.

May 22, 1720.

SERMON LIII.

SERM. LIII.

HAVE given you, without any fraud, the opinions that have broke the peace of our churches, to the defilement of the Christian faith, and the confusion of brotherly love, an argument that *wisdom* must first be *pure* before it can be *peaceable, gentle, or easie to be entreated.* I have not acted in the way that these men use with others, but in their own words, and in full quotations. The sum of what they say you may take in these four particulars.

Jam. iii. 17.

1. They are agreed that the name *God* is given to Christ in the holy Scriptures; but it's a poor and scandalous hypocrisie which they come into upon this head. One while declaring that they are as much for the Divinity of Christ as others, and yet upon some occasions speaking of his title with all the diminution that can be. Such an uncertain declaration is that, when persons say "they "are for *the proper Divinity* of our Saviour, tho' "they knew that by proper Divinity one side "means the same with what is ascrib'd to the Fa- "ther, and the other no more than may be affirm'd "of a creature." *We have renounced these hidden things of dishonesty, and dare not walk in craftiness or handle the word of the Lord deceitfully, but by a manifesta-*

2 Cor. iv. 2.

tion

tion of the truth would commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. SERM. LIII.

2. They say, notwithstanding their calling him God, that he is *not self-existent*, that he *derives* from the Father, and that they have no other way to secure the Unity of the Divine Nature, but by affirming there is no more than one person, who is truly and eternally God. 'Tis here that the ways part, upon this question we are divided, whether the Scripture in calling Christ *God*, means any less than it does in calling the Father *so*.

We have no controversie whether *He* has the name or no, or whether a *creature* may not have it. They yield the former to us, and we the latter to them, and therefore it would be the shortest as well as the fairest way to examine whether the holy Spirit has taught us to make any abatement in calling our Saviour God, which it would be blasphemy to suppose when we speak of the Father.

In that view I have all along proceeded quite thro' this copious argument. You have heard what the Scripture has said about his Divinity under those several heads: and I have shewn you that the *Arian* has no more reason to diminish the sense of those passages that relate to the Son, than an *Atheist* has to curtail and darken those that speak of the Father: that it's as easie to argue from the Bible that there is no God at all, as to deny the testimony that's given to our Saviour's Deity.

We think that none can be call'd God in the true and proper sense of the word, but One who is supreme, self-existent, underiv'd, unoriginated, as some love to speak in their *great swelling words of vanity*. That there is a God whom we read of under these characters is plain, and therefore we should be guilty of robbery to lessen or contract the sense of those Scriptures that are brought to prove it. What an injurious way of expounding would that

SERM. LIII. be for me to ſay, tho' I read *of the mighty God Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, the Father of lights, without any variableneſs or ſhadow of turning*, that it's poſſible theſe words may not ſignifie a ſupreme Being, and an original perfection?

And yet thus unfairly muſt we act with the ſame expreſſions concerning Chriſt Jeſus, if we diſpoſe of his character into their ſcheme. That is, when he is call'd *the mighty God*, it muſt be only a derivative Deity, tho' if the word was not us'd of *him*, it would ſignifie what it ſounds. Thus the Father of lights, in whom there is no variableneſs nor ſhadow of turning, muſt be an independent, unchangeable, and eternal Being, and they ſay right: but if *Jeſus is the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever*, tho' the titles are equal, they do not ſignifie ſo much. Thoſe Scriptures are exact-
Pſal. xc. 2. ly upon a level, *From everlaſting to everlaſting thou*
Iſa. ix. 6. *art God*, and *he is the mighty God, the everlaſting*
Mic. v. 2. *Father*, and *his goings forth have been of old from e-*
Rom. i. *verlaſting*. We read of God that *he is bleſſed for*
25. *ever*, and of Chriſt in the ſame epiſtle, that he *is*
ix. 5. *over all God bleſſed for ever*.

3. They are divided, as I have ſhewn you, about the worſhip that's paid to him. The Bible ſtares 'em ſo full in the face, that it's declaring their ſin as *Sodom* to deny him that devotion which his people have hitherto given him. The diſciples
Luke *worſhip'd him* after he was parted from 'em, and the
xxiv. 52. Saints do *in every place call on the name of the Lord*
1 Cor. i. 2. *Jeſus*. On the other hand, this practice is ſo unwieldy to their ſcheme, that ſome of 'em quite diſown it, and others are forc'd to ſoften it with a diſtinction that the Scripture has taught us to abhor, of a ſupreme and ſubordinate worſhip. So that,

4. That which they glory in as their peculiar and purgation from *Arianiſm*, is nothing but a little duſt

dust thrown into the eyes of the world. They will not say as the *Arians*, there was a time when the Son was not; but they tell us that he was deriv'd, and that whatever is deriv'd begun to be, and I am sure whatever had a beginning once was not. This is plunging into contradictions merely to avoid a name. 'Tis to no purpose that they tell us there was not the least moment of time when the Son and the Spirit were not; for what's the consequence of that, from those that deny him to be self-existent, but a principle that overthrows the very first maxim of our doctrine against the *Atheists*. SERM. LIII.

We plead, that there must have been a principal cause of all things, and that he must have existed when nothing else did; that his existence proves him to be the original of all things: but now we find there are two other persons who have existed equally with him, tho' they are infinitely unequal to him; that is, they are as much eternal as he. There never was a moment when the Son and the Spirit were not, which is as much as can be said of the Father; and yet an essence from everlasting, which *proves him* to be the first and independent cause, does not prove *them* so; what's the consequence of that, but that it proves nothing at all? As for example,

When I argue for the being of a God, and the glorious perfections of his nature, I put it thus: He that is before all things, and by whom all things consist, is the supreme original essence; but the great God is before all things, and by him all things consist. I should have thought the first of these propositions would have stood unmov'd thro' all the ages and parts of the world, but our new scheme has given it up: for *Christ is before all things, and by him all things consist*, and yet nevertheless he is God only as we are beings by derivation, tho' *of him, and to him, and thro' him are all things.* Rom. xi. 36.

I know

SERM. LIII.

I know not what theſe people will leave us; the doctrines of reveal'd religion are not, and will they take away the principles of nature too? *all theſe things are againſt us.* Don't we only loſe our Saviour from the throne of God, but are we to quit the very notion itſelf under which we have conceiv'd of a God? Shall we in complaiſance to a blaſphemous whim, ſay that a perſon may be *the Creator of the ends of the earth, the mighty God, the Alpha and Omega, the firſt and the laſt, the beginning and the ending,* that he may be *over all bleſſed for ever,* that he is *before all,* and yet not ſelf-exiſtent? Are theſe perfections ſeparable from the Divine Nature? Can One be all this, and not be a God? or if he is call'd a God upon theſe accounts, muſt the word ſignifie leſs in him than it does in another?

Shall the Scripture, which we reckon to be the beſt book in the world, leave us no diſtinction either in our language or our practice between the firſt cauſe, and the chief of ſecond cauſes, between him that is deriv'd, and him that is not? the *Mahometans* have none of this difficulty in their *Alcoran,* they don't pretend to call their prophet by the name of God. And has the only Divine Book that's given to men, left 'em confus'd, where above all things they ought to be moſt determin'd? Are we like *the Samaritans, worſhiping we know not what?* or with the *Athenians,* ſetting up an altar to *an unknown God?*

Joh. iv. 22. Acts xvii. 23.

The queſtion whether Chriſt is God or no, enters into the very life of our devotion; 'tis impoſſible we ſhould take one right ſtep till this is clear'd; becauſe if he be, we may neglect to honour him as God, and if he is not, we may worſhip more than the true God. We think the Scripture has made it evident enough; but if the nobleſt expreſſions are diſtinguiſh'd away, and that calling him God is not to be underſtood of his being

being so, let us never talk of a veil upon the hearts of the *Jews* and the *Mahometans*. No, Christianity, according to this scheme, is the most clouded religion in the world, where we are *ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.* But I must remember my promise; and that is, SERM. LIII.

2. To lay before you the reasons they give for their opinion, that Christ is *not self-existent.* And the plea lies in a less room than perhaps you imagine. For,

1. They mightily insist upon what is never denied, that he is inferior to the Father; and to that end bring in swarms of Scripture that are nothing at all to the purpose, but must every one of 'em be understood either of his human nature, or his mediatorial office. This is no part of the question, nor ever was, whether or no in some sense or other the Son is not subordinate to the Father. 'Tis universally own'd that he was *made of a woman, and made under the law.* In this respect he is a creature, a body has God prepared for him. And to this head you may place a vast number of sentences, that *the Father is greater than he,* that *the head of Christ is God,* that He is *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,* that *the Son himself is made subject.* Gal. iv. 4. Joh. xiv. 28. 1 Cor. xi. 3. Eph. i. 3. 1 Cor. xv. 28.

If they bring in these to confront what is said of his Divinity, 'tis trifling with the argument. They may as well plead against the immortality of the soul, that man was made of the dust of the earth. This is a sorry shuffle to contradict what is said of one part by what we read about the other. Christ, as *in the form of a servant,* is not so much as a subordinate God, in that respect he is no God at all; but as Mediator between God and man, he is *the man Christ Jesus.* So that, here you may keep your stand, and tell 'em, that the question is not whether the Son is a creature, and inferior

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'Tis an unhandſome inſinuation to ſay, that for one text that ſpeaks of him as God, there are an hundred that declare him to be ſubordinate. The reaſon of that is plain, becauſe the chief revelation we have of him is as Mediator. We read very little of his original and abſolute perfections; but the queſtion is, whether there is not one paſſage in all the Bible that repreſents him as equal to the Father? If there is but a ſingle text to this purpoſe, the doctrine muſt be true. We can eaſily underſtand ſuch a Scripture harmoniouſly to thoſe of a different ſound. Theſe words, *I and my Father are one*, muſt refer to another nature than what he ſpeaks of, when he ſaith, *My Father is greater than I.* Joh. x. 30.

The *Jews* would never have charg'd him with making himſelf *equal to God*, had he talk'd of nothing higher than his human ſoul and body. When he ſpeaks of his dying, he could not be ſuppos'd to give that as an evidence of any more than a created nature; that was not *making himſelf God.* But 'tis plain, beſides this, he uſes other language which they thought too much for a creature.

And therefore keep the adverſary to this point; let him not wander into the proofs of what you don't deny. Remember the queſtion is, whether the holy Spirit has not ſpoke of him in the ſame language that he does of the Father; and this Spirit that bears witneſs of him is *truth.* If they tell you that the words do not ſignifie ſo much when applied to the Son, examine whether the Bible itſelf has given you any foundation for making the difference: *Hold faſt that you have, and let no man take away your crown.*

2. Another

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2. Another argument us'd for this opinion is, that to ſuppoſe the Son is God in the true ſenſe of the word, is to make him the ſame Perſon with the Father. Thus we may behold them pleading in full career. One author tells us that it's abſurd to ſuppoſe that Chriſt made ſatisfaction to himſelf, that he was both the giver and the receiver of the price. And what does all this amount to? Has it any other force than from our unacquaintedneſs with the myſteries of the Divine Nature? Does it prove any more than that *we cannot by ſearching find out God, that we cannot find out the Almighty to perfection?* Joh. xi. 7.

Muſt that be laid down as a maxim, that nothing can be true of the Deity, but what appears likely to human reaſon? *Who is this that darkens counſel by words without knowledge?* Are we not *uttering things we know not, things too wonderful for us, that we underſtand not?* 'Tis no part of the queſtion, whether the doctrines we have concerning God are ſuch as we ſhould have thought moſt *probable*; but whether they are *reveal'd* or no. If he has told us ſome things of himſelf which appear very inconceivable, 'tis no offence to my faith, that the Divine Nature is not to be comprehended by the human. That he is not ſuch a one as I am, that ſomething may conſiſt with the unity of *his* eſſence, that would not do ſo with *mine*. Job xxxviii. 2. xlii. 3.

Indeed I ought not to receive any thing concerning God (which appears unlikely) upon the teſtimony of man, becauſe ſuch a one intrudes into what he has not ſeen; he is *wiſe above what is written*. But the record that God himſelf has given us is about things that *He* has ſeen. And therefore, I have no other enquiry than this, whether he has *ſaid* it or no? If he has, my faith does not aſſent to it, upon the rational objective evidence that I have of the thing itſelf, but the veracity and wiſdom of him who has reveal'd it.

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I could make a thouſand objections againſt the reſurrection of the dead; and ſuch difficulties go along with it, as perhaps we ſhall never anſwer till we come to the thing itſelf: but no doctrine is the leſs true for its being incomprehenſible. Suppoſe I ask, with what body ſhall I ariſe? What becomes of that which gave this fleſh and bones a conſiſtence, when they are both reduc'd to duſt, or it may be converted to another form? If I am to have this body again, what is it for? What will be its proper food? it was made for the ſupports of meat and drink before the defilements of ſin. Hunger and thirſt are not owing to the fall. How then is it to be the ſame body I now have, and yet have none of the ſubſiſtence that it now enjoys?

Such queſtions as theſe would multiply, a new ſwarm would riſe out of every one of 'em. But what then? Is there to be no reſurrection becauſe I cannot explain it? Does my reaſon ſtand centinel to my faith, that what the one will not admit, the other dare not receive? no, this is quite deſtroying the nature of faith, which is an aſſent to a propoſition upon the teſtimony of another. I believe the reſurrection, not becauſe it is a thing likely, but purely becauſe it's told me in plain and eaſie words: 'tis not a thing incredible with me, that God *can* raiſe the dead, but it would have been very incredible that he *will* do ſo, if he himſelf had not ſaid it.

Acts xxvi. 6.

And juſt ſo it is here: there's nothing that I have in nature fit to illuſtrate, and much leſs to *prove* that three are no more than one, and one no leſs than three. And I wiſh that the fancies of men had been more ſparing and modeſt upon this head. Explaining a myſtery is nonſenſe, proving it is dutiful. I have no more to do with a myſtery, than to ſhew that it is ſo; but it ceaſes to be myſterious,

ous if I can shew *how* it is. I am very sensible that to say that *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob* were one in nature, makes 'em three men; and I must own that no testimony but that of Scripture could have taught us to say, that the Father, Son, and holy Ghost are but one God. SERM. LIII.

If he has not told us this, it is not true; but never let us go that way to work, to suppose that *he* has not said it, merely because *we* cannot understand it. If the question had been to *Nicodemus*, whether Jesus Christ really spoke of the new birth, he would have own'd he did. His difficulty was not upon that head, whether Jesus spake so or no, but upon the truth of the doctrine itself, *How can these things be? Can a man enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?* Now if he had believ'd both the wisdom and the truth of this person that told him so, that he could not be deceiv'd himself, and would not deceive another, he must have been satisfied about the matter, tho' he knew not *how* to conceive of it. Joh. iii. 4.

(2.) You may farther observe, that in this argument they will not attend to the distinction of two natures in the Mediator, and of three Persons in the Deity, which we always assert, *There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man.* 'Tis an unhappiness that we are forc'd to repeat a thousand times what these people are resolv'd to take no notice of. It looks as if they were sworn to deaden us with noise, like those at *Ephesus*, who cried out for two hours together, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians.* 1 Tim. ii. 6.

What signifies it to urge that making the Son God is supposing him to be the person who both gives and receives the satisfaction, and that is making him the Father? as if they were resolv'd to bully us out of the doctrine we contend for, and thought that a mere noise of words would persuade

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us we had actually given up what they themſelves are angry with us for holding faſt? Don't we always obſerve the diſtinction of perſons, when we ſpeak of the work of redemption? Is not that one of the things in queſtion, whether the Father and the Son are really diſtinct? And muſt we be charg'd with denying this at the ſame time that we take all the pains we can to affirm it? Are they reſolv'd that we ſhall ſay there is but one perſon, merely becauſe we ſay there is but one Divine Nature, tho' they hear ſo often from us that there are *three?* But,

(3.) It ſhews that men are unperſuadable, when they will admit no medium between *Sabellianiſm* and *Tritheiſm*, *i. e.* if we will not deny three Perſons, they ſay we muſt aſſert three Gods. This is the hardeſt uſage that people can meet with, when no confeſſions, proteſtations, or ſubſcriptions can avail us againſt the noiſe of impudence. The declaration that all the proteſtant churches came into at the time that God begun to ſtir the world with a concern about religion is equally againſt both theſe errors. And tho' the phraſes are a little different, yet the ſenſe of 'em all ſtrikes upon this ſingle point, that

" There is one only the living and true God, " and that there are three perſons in the Godhead, " the Father, the Son, and the holy Ghoſt; and " theſe three are one God, the ſame in ſubſtance " or eſſence, and equal in power and glory." If notwithſtanding all this, they reſolve that we ſhall be either againſt three perſons, or for three Gods, they only give the greater evidence of being *wicked and unreaſonable men*; which the Apoſtle affirms of the *men that have not faith.* They are like the perſon whom *Solomon* tells us of, that he is *not to be corrected with words, for, tho' he underſtands he will not*

2 Theſ. iii. 2.

not answer. False witnesses rise up, and lay to our charge things that we know not. And yet, SERM. LIII.

(4.) If we do say, that Christ gave satisfaction to himself, I don't see it's such a gross way of speaking as these polite men would persuade us; for we must still take the Scripture to be *a form of sound words*, and that tells us, that he *presents the church unto himself*, and that he will *present us faultless before the presence of his own glory*. I cannot imagine there's any contradiction in such a phrase as this, tho' it lies as open to the petulancy of their remark as that which they are so angry at. Ps. cix. 7. Eph. v. 27. Jude 24.

3. Another of their pleadings is, that their scheme is most agreeable to the light of nature, and the language of the old philosophers. I shall answer this in two particulars.

(1.) I partly believe it; for there is something in their way that comes nearer to *an excellency of speech and wisdom* than the Apostle had a mind to do. Theirs are not words that the holy Ghost teaches; and indeed the account I have met with of antient writers does abundantly convince me that what they are contending for, is but so much foreign foam brought into the Christian faith. 1 Cor. ii. 1.

I'll lay before you some opinions of the learned men among the *Egyptians* and *Persians*, and leave you to compare 'em with what we hear of a supreme and a deriv'd God, and the one being the instrument of the other in the work of creation. *Mercurius Trismegistus* saith with *Zoroaster*, that "the "Father of all things produc'd not the world by "his own hands like a workman, but by *the word*; "and that this word which proceeds from him, "communicating its fecundity to nature has gi- "ven the water a power of generation and pro- "duction." They tell us of "a supreme Being, "or the only God who existed before the Crea- "tor of the world, remaining in the solitude of

SERM. LIII. " his unity: that it was not the Father who pro-
" duc'd the univerſe, for he was ſuperior to the
" Creator." Again, we are told that " the *Egyp-*
" *tians* acknowledg'd the ſecond perſon inferior to
" the firſt, who tho' he never was ſeparate from
" him, yet he receiv'd his ideas of him. He was
" no production, but the *emanation* of the firſt
" God. He was the Agent of the univerſe, and
" therefore call'd Δημιεργὸς the maſter of the
" world." This is the very name that the antient hereticks gave him.

And becauſe a certain author, who out of the abundance of his heart has ſet his tongue a ſpeaking, and his pen a rambling, has laid his charge againſt me of writing as vile things of the Chriſtian religion, as *Porphyry* the known enemy of that doctrine ever did, I'll give you an account what *Porphyry*'s ſentiment was and you ſhall judge who comes neareſt him. He is quoted by *Cyrill* of *Alexandria*, as ſaying that " the firſt
" power has produc'd the intellect or word un-
" ſpeakable to man, by whom are all things, who
" came out of the Deity, who ſhone forth before
" all ages, who is eternally before all time, for
" there was no time when he firſt appeared. It
" was not by any command, or even by an act of
" the will that the Deity brought him forth, but
" by a neceſſary emanation.

Thus writ the great enemy of Chriſtianity then, thus write the perverters of Chriſtianity now. But, are we to be turn'd from the truth to *Jewiſh* fables, and *Egyptian* darkneſs? Are we to learn our religion from thoſe that knew not God, but *became vain in their imaginations*, and had their fooliſh hearts all over darken'd? We are bid to *beware*
Col. ii. 7. *leſt any man beguile us by philoſophy and vain deceit after the rudiments of the world, after the commandments of men, and not after Chriſt.* Have they got

the *Egyptian* follies with their mummies? Are they resolv'd to seek the living among the dead? Was there any need of Christ as a teacher, and the Spirit to lead us into the way of all truth, if instead of hearkening to them we must seek to wizards that *peep and mutter?* But, when men *turn away their ears from the truth, they are turned to fables*; not only to a falshood in the matter of their doctrine, but to a fabulous silly way of telling it. With a contempt, and a very just one, does the Apostle call 'em *old wives fables*, that are equally opposite to sense and godliness. For,

(2.) Is this scheme of theirs so very agreeable to reason? Don't they tell us of a God who did not create the world in person, but only by proxy? Must we not hence conclude, that creation is not the work of an almighty but a deriv'd power? and that it ceases to be, what all ages have hitherto made it, the argument of a Deity: *We worship and bow down before the Lord our Maker. Know that the Lord he is God; it is he that has made us, and not we ourselves. The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.* Is it not very strange that God himself should give us a book, that we might have eternal life in the knowledge of him and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent; and that we should read of Jesus Christ in the same fulness and glory of language that's us'd for himself, and yet be oblig'd to take the same words in different senses? that we must neither know whether he is God or a creature? whether he is to be worship'd or no? have no bounds set to our veneration of him, and to keep it from rising into idolatry?

Ps. xcv. 6; c. 3.

Rom. i. 20.

June 19, 1720.

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WE will now take a little more compaſs in examining whether this new ſcheme is ſo very agreeable to human reaſon, and whether the dignity of our nature will be moſt ſecur'd by faith or by unbelief. The doctrine they contend for is this, "That the Father pro- "duc'd the Son, the *Arians* ſay by creation; and "theſe younger brethren ſay it is by emanation. "The Father and Son made the Spirit, and the "Father left it to the Son to create the world, "and to the Spirit to ſanctifie the church.

This is the notion which they ſet out with all the pomp that their learning is able to give it, as more ſcriptural and rational than a Trinity of Perſons, who are the ſame in ſubſtance, and equal in power and glory. But does not every one ſee that

1. This is running into the old *Egyptian* folly, which repreſented the Supreme God as altogether unactive, a lumpiſh Deity, who did nothing himſelf, but committed all the affairs of nature and worſhip to deputies and vicegerents? Our Lord tells us, *My Father works hitherto, and I work.* And, *By faith we underſtand that the worlds were made by the word of God: He ſpake and it was done, he commanded and it ſtood faſt.* His people who had

Joh. v. 17. Heb. xi. 3. Pſ. xxxiii. 9.

had their instructions from himself were always taught to approach him as *the Lord their Maker.* They look'd upon themselves as *the work of his hand, and the sheep of his pasture.* We are to conceive of creation as the produce of an infinite agent. It's the Lord who *stretches forth the heavens, and laid the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him.* His providential kingdom rules over all; he gives out the word indeed, and great is the company of those that publish it; but he himself is *the former of all things, the Lord of hosts is his name.* He made the earth by his wisdom, and stretched out the heavens by his understanding. We must *fear God, and give glory to him, and worship him, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and the fountains of waters. His hands have made and fashion'd us round about.* He is said to *make the morning darkness, and tread upon the high places of the earth, and to declare unto man what is his thought. None of the vanities of the heathen can give rain, neither can the heavens* of themselves *give showers. Art not thou He, O Lord our God? therefore we will wait upon thee, for thou hast made all these things.*

SERM. LIV. xcv. 7. Zech xii. 1. Rev. xiv. 7. Job x. 8. Amos iv. 13. Jer. xiv. 22.

The revelation of the Bible never taught us to consider the world as any thing else but the effect of the great God: *He set it in his heart,* contriv'd the model, and afterwards look'd on all things that *he had made, and behold they were very good.* And is not this a more useful notion, that creation was the immediate agency of the supreme cause, than to dream as the heathen did, according to the vanity of their mind, that he was oblig'd to employ servants? They thought of the Divine Nature just as they did of the human, that activity was an expence and fatigue. But this is owing to the impurity of their imaginations; for we know that *the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary, and there's no searching out of his understanding.*

Gen. i. 31. Isa. xl. 28.

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derſtanding. It was no difficulty to him; he did it all by his word, and the breath of his mouth.

Creation is to us a viſible argument of the *inviſible things of Him* that wrought it, *even his eternal power and godhead.*

Rom. i. 20.

But if we ſuppoſe that he built the world, as *Solomon* did the temple, only by appointing others, there's nothing in the argument. Creation ceaſes to be the evidence of an almighty power, and proves no more than a commiſſion iſſued out to an inferior. 'Tis not the work of a Deity, but a delegate. Whereas, we find a Perſon in the Divine Nature diſtinct from Chriſt, and ſpeaking to him, repreſenting himſelf as the author of the univerſe:

Iſa. xlii. 5, 6.

Thus ſaith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and ſtretched them out, he that ſpread forth the earth, and that which comes out of it; he that gives breath to the people upon it, and ſpirit to them that walk therein. That this is to be underſtood of the Father, you will ſee by the next words, *I the Lord have call'd thee in righteouſneſs, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people for a light to the Gentiles.*

How vain muſt the Apoſtle's diſcourſe have been at *Athens*, if he had carried any diſciples of this new ſcheme in his train? His doctrine was, *Him whom ye ignorantly worſhip, declare I unto you.* And who was that? *the God that had made the world, and all things therein, the Lord of heaven and earth.* Might not a *Grecian* have pull'd him back from that aſſertion, and ſaid, 'tis true, God *appointed* the world to be made; and that Jeſus whom your doctrine ſpeaks of was the truſtee of the whole affair. But the Apoſtle was a ſtranger to theſe profane babblings; he look'd upon heaven and earth as the immediate work of the great God, who had *made of one blood all nations of men, in whom we live, and move, and*

Acts xvii. 23, 24.

have

have our being, and is therefore not far from any of us? SERM. LIV.

Indeed both the Son and the Spirit in different places of Scripture are spoke of as the efficients of the creation, but without any subordination to the Father: for, as it is sometimes said, that *God created all things by Christ Jesus*, so 'tis as plain that Christ himself was the Supreme Creator, as you have heard at large. Creation itself is God's own making all things out of nothing by the word of his power. And which is the most reasonable to say, with the Scripture, that he who made all things out of nothing was the supreme cause, or with these men, that he was only an officer appointed by him?

2. This scheme has made a clumsy distribution of the works committed to the Son and Spirit. They suppose that the former is charg'd with the creation of the world, and the latter with the religion of it, and yet they speak of the Son as the maker of the Spirit. Now lay all these together, and you will conclude, that the lower the agent, the greater the work. What the Son does in their range of notions is no way comparable to what the Spirit does, so that we are quite struck off from saying with *David, Among the gods there's nothing like unto thee, O Lord, neither are there any works like unto thy works.* Ps. lxxxvi. 8.

What is that notion that we feel within ourselves, or see display'd before our eyes? What are these visible heavens, and this earth, that's so full of God's glory, if you match 'em with the more important work that's produc'd in every believer? 'tis more to make a Saint, than it is to make a world. When *God caused light to shine out of darkness at first,* he did less than causing *the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ to shine into our hearts.* 'Tis a greater *day of his* power to make us *willing*, than to make us living souls. And

SERM. LIV. And is it not ſtrange that He to whom they deny the name of a God ſhould be charg'd with the moſt wonderful things that are ever to be done? The Son rejoices in the creation that he has wrought; but this is all to vaniſh. Theſe heavens that are ſo bright a volume, and which he has fill'd with ſo many glories, are to be roll'd up as a ſcroll, to paſs away and be no more. And yet One whom they ſuppoſe to be a lower agent does nothing but what is for eternity. So that according to this, which they will needs paſs upon us for *rational religion*, at the conſummation of all things, the nobler efficient ſhall have nothing to ſhew, and one that is inferior will have his whole performance about him.

The great God takes care of the world, he ſatisfies the earth with his works, he gave the horſe his ſtrength, he cloath'd his neck with thunder; he gave the goodly wings to the peacock, and feathers to the oſtrich; the rain calls him Father, he alone has begotten the drops of the dew. Either he did all theſe things immediately, or he committed 'em to the Son. Well, of this there will be no remains in that eternity of fulneſs and glory that his people are going into.

The Spirit is beneath the Son; he muſt have a lower nature, and therefore one would think, a lower charge. Now, what does *he* do? I anſwer, from him we have the Scriptures, *holy men of God ſpake as they were mov'd by the holy Ghoſt.* This is more than the viſible heavens; for the heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, but not one tittle or ἰῶτα of what he has inſpir'd ſhall be loſt for ever. And again, all that the Spirit does in us, as well as for us, ſhall be immortal.

2 Pet. i. 21.

The Son is now ſurrounded with a vaſt creation: *There's not any number of his armies, and upon whom does not his light ariſe?* But when all theſe

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are sunk, every one that is born of the Spirit is to be an everlasting attendant upon his throne. *God gives to every seed his own body*, saith the Apostle, and these all come from him; but such as the Spirit has formed are *born of the incorruptible seed that lives and endures for ever.* 1 Pet. i. 23.

So that upon the whole, this is their scheme, He that is truly, absolutely and properly God, does nothing at all in us and for us immediately by himself. He that is next him, and has the name of God, gives us all the benefits that are of a lower sort, many of which shall perish with the life we are now in; but here is a third that has neither the nature nor the title of God, and no claim to divine worship, and yet he is the author of our best and all our immortal benefits.

Indeed I cannot think their scheme has made a fair partition, unless they believe, as I am afraid they do, it's a greater thing to be a man than to be a saint, and will deny that the works of the Spirit are superior to those of nature and providence. But we are taught to say, that *he who has wrought us for the self same thing is God. It is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. It is God who causes us to triumph in Christ Jesus; we are the epistle of Christ Jesus, written by the Spirit of the living God.* 2 Cor. v. 5. Phil. ii. 13. 2 Cor. ii. 14. iii. 3.

3. These fancies are chiefly owing to philosophy and vain deceit. Whereas God sent not his Apostles to preach *with wisdom of Words; for it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent; where is the wise? where is the scribe? where's the disputer of this world? has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God; for* 1 Cor. i. 17. 19. 20. 21. iii. 19, 20.

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it is written, he takes the wise in their own craftiness; And again, The Lord knows the thoughts of men that they are vain.

Many of the antient writers for the Christian religion had a great mind to bring their *Platonical* notions into the mysteries of our faith. They had

1 Tim. vi. 20, 21. *a knowledge falsly so called, which some having professed, concerning the faith have erred.* They had read more than the unlearned part of the church could do, and had not come with the Apostle to

Phil. iii. 8. *count all things but dross and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord.* Besides, they thought that was the way to bring in the heathen, and make our doctrines pass the better upon them, when they saw how little they differed from their own.

But how desirable soever the affluence of numbers to the Christian church might be, yet it's pity to spoil the faith for their sakes. They must be brought to the rule, and not the rule to them. We have reason enough to fear, that this *wisdom of words* which they admitted into their preaching *made the cross of Christ of none effect.* The doctrine of Christ forc'd its way with the demonstration of the Spirit and with power, whilst it was not attended with the enticing words of man's wisdom; and if ever the purity and simplicity of this truth are to be confounded with the notions which man's wisdom teaches, philosophy cannot countervail the King's damage, or restore what it has taken away.

1 Cor. ii. 5. For *our faith is not to stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*

4. Another grand objection is taken from that mysterious word that the holy Spirit is pleased to make use of in calling Christ *the begotten of the Father.* The liberty that's us'd with that phrase has so much in it of *filthiness and foolish talking*, that we ought not without the severest caution

tion to take it into our lips. Upon this they found their notion of his being *deriv'd.* SERM. LIV.

A certain author by telling the ſtory ſo often in his pamphlets ſhews how full he is of his own repartee: When he was ask'd if Chriſt was underived, he ſtav'd it off, by putting the other queſtion whether he was *unbegotten*; and how eaſily might an atheiſt put a third, which I ſhall not mention? May I not ſay of theſe men, *Spots they are and blemiſhes, ſporting themſelves with their own deceivings, whilſt they feaſt with you?* What ſcandalous things *Servetus* fetch'd out of this word, perhaps ſome of you may know, and the reſt of you need not. I had rather leave ſuch objections in their own ſhame than pretend to anſwer 'em. But, 2 Pet. ii. 13.

(1.) You are very ſenſible this meaſuring an infinite nature by a finite is the way to plunge at once into confuſion and blaſphemy. *Theſe filthy dreamers defile the fleſh.* The great God has been pleaſed to make uſe of that language that obtains among our ſelves, but it's impoſſible to underſtand him in ſuch a ſenſe as the words muſt have in the human nature without becoming *vain in our imaginations.* We muſt give up every perfection of the Deity, if we do not throw out of theſe phraſes all theſe things that ſignify the weakneſs of a creature. Jude 8.

Thus his having hands and eyes and feet may be pleaded againſt his being a ſpirit, as they are by ſome *Socinian* writers. The words of anger, grief, revenge, pity and love would hurry us to believe, that he is of like paſſions with our ſelves, if we did not controul the ſound of them with this thought, that he is God and not man.

With theſe guards and diſtinctions ought you to conſider that awful term that the holy Spirit has adopted into his own book. For though we read of

SERM. LIV. of Christ as *the only begotten of the Father*, yet *who shall declare his generation?* As the word it self cannot possibly signify *that* in the Divine Nature that it does in the human; methinks it's reveal'd on purpose to stun the imagination of men, and shew them that it means something which they know not. *Agur*, perhaps, had given too much way to these enquiries, for which he saith, *I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man, I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.* We may suppose of what nature these things are that he was ignorant of by the next words, *Who has ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the winds in his fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the Earth? What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?*

Prov. xxx. 2, 3, 4.

(2.) That it does not signify a derivation of nature in the way that it must do when we use it of one another, is plain from all those Scriptures that speak of Christ as they do of the Father. He would never have been call'd alpha and omega, *The first and the last, the beginning and the ending*, or said to be *from everlasting*, and *before all things*, if his being was received from another. It destroys indeed the *Sabellian* fancy, and proves him to be distinct from the Father, for the word Son carries in it the name of another person; and tho' in us it would signify a beginning, yet we cannot admit it in him without a spunge upon those passages in the Bible that tell us quite the contrary. He cannot be the *everlasting Father*, if he is a derived Son, nor is he *before all things*, if any thing was before him.

Isa. ix. 6. Col. i. 17.

(3.) The most apparent design of the word, I think, is to express an identity or sameness of nature between the Father and the Son; that we are to conceive of the one as we do of the other. To

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be sure, this was never design'd to explain the *manner* of his derivation, and therefore I see no necessity to understand it of any derivation at all. For whenever it's us'd among creatures, 'tis to tell us that the being is exactly the same in the parent and the offspring. The time of existence is only a circumstance. The last child that was born into the world has the same human nature with *Adam* himself; and the characters of priority and subjection, of coming sooner or later, being stronger or weaker, make no difference in the nature it self. The son is as much a man as the father; and it would be an odd way of arguing, when I say that a man and his son are equal in nature, by which I mean they are equally rational, spiritual and immortal, and whatever is essential to the human nature, for any to cut me short, and say, that the Father was before the Son; *that* does not enter into the question, human nature is the same in a child as in a parent, in a subject as in a king. All these individuals have no other distinction among 'em but what is circumstantial; as to the nature it self they are equal, the same in essence. SERM. LIV.

Now though priority and succession are neither essential nor contradictory to the human nature, yet they are so to the Divine. It is necessary in God that he be the first, *before all things*; and therefore if any one has a beginning he may be very glorious, but he cannot be God, because he must want that which is the grand essential of Deity. So that the question is not whether Christ has a glorious capacity above every other being, whether he has not an existence before them, and inconceivably above them. This still does not denominate him a God.

If he is begotten of the Father, and yet have not the same nature with the Father, the word must be taken in a sense that it never would bear any where

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where elſe. If it is deſign'd to expreſs a derivation, it expreſſes what the Father has not, nay what is oppoſite to his nature, a downright contradiction to every notion of Deity; and I cannot apprehend, that in making the Son an inferior, I ſhall ever anſwer the title of his being the only begotten Son of God. Upon the whole, the word is to ſignify ſomething; the *manner* of derivation it cannot, the *time* it does not; and if it ſignifies the *derivation* it ſelf, it argues a different nature, for a communicated divinity is a jar upon what we always mean by divinity.

(4.) 'Tis certain, that this word is applied to ſome *periods* that cannot refer to the Son's derivation of an exiſtence from the Father. His miraculous conception in the Virgin *Mary* is brought as one ground of the title, *Therefore the holy thing that ſhall be born of thee ſhall be called the Son of God.* The ſtand that the *Socinians* make here we all of us know; they tell you, that at this time he begun to be, but that's an error out of faſhion at preſent; another is uppermoſt in the wheel, though I believe it will not continue long ſo.

Luke i. 35.

Will any one now ſay from this Scripture that the only reaſon of his being called the Son of God was ſuch a conception? Had he not the title antecedent to it and independent on it?

Another period is his reſurrection. Then he was *declared to be the Son of God with power*; but the phraſe it ſelf plainly ſignifies not his entring into the name, but giving it a new diſcovery and manifeſtation. The Apoſtle applies what *David* had ſaid ſo long ago to that period, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*; but will they ſay that the word ſignifies a derivation in this place? Was that indeed *the day* of his birth? Had he no exiſtence till *then?* Every one gives up this meaning of the phraſe, 'tis too groſs to be contend-

Rom. i. 4.

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ed for in *that Scripture*, tho' they make it necessa- SERM.
ry in others; and therefore you need do no more LIV.
upon their boasted argument, than change the situation of it: As for example, they plead, he that was begotten was derived, the word can signify nothing but a communication of being: try whether it does or no upon the passage I have now given you, *God spake of a certain time, This day have I begotten thee:* i. e. according to them, this day thou hast received thine existence; and therefore if the word can bear no other sense but a derivation of being, it must signify that Christ begun to be at his resurrection.

'Tis plain that in this Scripture it cannot refer to a communication of nature, for he was the Son of God in every sense of the word before; and therefore that interpretation of the phrase is not *necessary* in all places which is *impossible* in one. If it *must not* signify derivation in this text, it *may not* do so in another. And perhaps the holy Spirit has us'd it thus on purpose to shew us, that he never meant by it, what one that is *carnally minded* tells us he does. It is essential to God that he be underived; and so it must be to him who is the only begotten of the Father: If they have the Divine Nature equally, it is in all its perfections.

3. The methods they take to oppose the truth are such as no integrity will allow of. I omit their *walking in slanders*, saying the most they can against an author, when they can say nothing against his arguments; throwing dirt at the man in hopes of blasting the cause. These are arts that may take in the hurry of a dispute, but they will either be matter of repentance *with* the grace of God, or of reproach *without* it. Such methods are always the scandal of a good interest, and a dead weight to a bad one: *No lie can be of the truth,* or 1 Joh. ii. 21.

SERM. LIV. capable of doing it any good. The ways they are put to are ſuch as theſe.

Firſt, They take all the pains they can to diſguiſe the queſtion; they love to uſe ambiguous phraſes, and keep the ſenſe of them undetermin'd; that if they cannot *convince* you, they may have it in their power to retreat, and ſay they don't *contradict* you. This unmanly fraud is the whole ſpirit of their books, lurking and ſhuffling under deceitful words; which method I will ſhew you they are guilty of, and expoſe it with the contempt it deſerves.

Secondly, Another of their arts, that the lovers of a righteous cauſe will deſpiſe, is this, to pretend all along that the doctrine we are ſtriving for has no foundation in Scripture, but its whole authority from councils and creeds and catechiſms. The falſhood of this charge we can eaſily ſhew to any ingenuous perſon, tho' the people that make it are harden'd againſt all conviction.

Thirdly, The myſteries of our religion are reproached as ſo many breaches of *free-thinking*: that they are only a ſett of thoughts that have ſlid into us by education; what we have never examin'd, but take for granted at a venture.

Fourthly, In purſuit of their cauſe, they go ſearching into books, and bring out paſſages directly oppoſite to the deſign of the authors. The diſingenuity of this practice is too groſs for any but the advocates of a corrupted cauſe to admit of.

Fifthly, Their deſiring that doctrines may be deliver'd in the expreſs words of Scripture is another ſtale artifice to *deceive the ſimple*. As this was never their own practice it can be no more than a vain deluſion.

Sixthly,

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Sixthly, Their intimations that a love of charity and more enlarged notions of liberty are the credit of their scheme, is what I will examine.

Seventhly, The contempt with which they speak of mysteries, and their ways to dull the regard of men to the worship of God, is the most powerful of all their arts. *They allure thro' the lusts of the flesh those that are clean escaped from them that live in error.*

Eighthly, The poor shuffle of denying themselves to be *Arians*, and reconciling their schemes to the creeds they abhor, is such an avowed dissimulation, that we may wonder that the very name of *sincerity* should ever come out of their mouths. I shall not open the charge at present. Those of you that have look'd into their books will at the first sound of these particulars know that they are easily prov'd. But I will take up no more of your time now than to give you this one reflection upon what you have heard. That

If there is a design to assault the first article of your religion, if these are the *arguments*, and these the *methods* of those that are in it, what need have you to be establish'd! The war has spread it self far and near; he must be a stranger in *Israel* that knows not these things. Do therefore, as they would do, who live in an infected place; get a preservative by letting *the word of God dwell richly in you*, and above all, desire the protection of that Spirit who can *lead you into the way of all truth*. Let those that fear the Lord speak often one to another; *Build up one another in your most holy faith, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.* Rom. i. 12.

July 17. 1723.

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THAT theſe are the ways they take to ſhew their charity and *free-thinking* is notorious to every one who reads what they have writ. It would be as uſeleſs as it is voluminous, to give you all the examples that their books pour in upon us of ſuch an unfairneſs in argument and hypocriſie in conduct. I ſhall briefly take notice of their practice, and ſhew you the diſcord there is between the methods of this party, and thoſe that the God of truth has directed us to, in proclaiming his Goſpel. The

2 Cor. vi. 3, 4, 6, 7. Apoſtles *gave no offence leſt the miniſtry ſhould be blamed, but in all things approved themſelves as the miniſters of God, by pureneſs, by knowledge, by the holy Ghoſt, by love unfeigned; by the word of truth, by the power of God.* Where they *had been ſhamefully entreated, they were ſtill bold in God to ſpeak the Goſpel*

1 Theſ. ii. 3, 4, 5. *of God with much contention. Their exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanneſs, nor of guile; but as they were allowed of God to be put in truſt with the Goſpel, ſo they preached, not as pleaſing men, but God who ſearches the hearts; neither at any time us'd they flattering words, nor a cloak of covetouſneſs.*

1. I begin with the firſt of theſe accuſations that you have heard, and that is their continual endeavours to diſguiſe the queſtion, that we may never

John iii. 20, 21. know what it is we diſpute about. *Every one that does evil hates the light, neither comes he to the light, leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved; but he that does*

xviii. 20. Act. xxvi. 26. *truth comes to the light that his deeds may be made manifeſt that they are wrought in God.* Chriſt himſelf *ever ſpake openly. Theſe things were not done in a corner.*

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The oppoſite way argues ſuch a diffidence of their cauſe as they would be unwilling to own; and therefore the propoſal made to them by Dr. *Waterland* is what would ſoon bring the controverſy to an end. "Diſpute fair, drop ambiguous terms "or elſe define them, put not groſs things upon "us, contemn every thing but truth, ſearch after "truth, and keep cloſe to the queſtion, and then "it will ſoon be ſeen, whether *Arianiſm* or catho-"liciſm be the Scripture-doctrine of the Trinity. SERM. LV.

1ſt. 'Tis a breach of this honeſt rule for them to trifle with the ſeveral meanings of the word GOD in Scripture; and when we have prov'd that the title is given to Chriſt as it is to the Father, to ſham us off with an arbitrary diſtinction between a ſupreme and a ſubordinate God. They know this is out of the queſtion; we have no need to demonſtrate that he is called God in ſome ſenſe or other. They allow that, and *we* grant that the name is given to angels, to men, nay, to Satan himſelf.

But what's this to the purpoſe? Is it not in many places a divine peculiar, and ſo given to the ſupreme Being, as it would be blaſphemy to ſay it of any other? *Thou art great and doſt wondrous things; thou art God alone. I am the Lord,* ſaith he, *That is my name, and my glory will I not give to another. His name alone is Jehovah.* We have *no other Gods before him; the Lord our God is one Lord:* and therefore when we bring examples of Chriſt's being the great *Jehovah,* they muſt, in anſwer, do one of theſe two things. Pſ. lxxxvi. 10. lxxxiii. 18. Deut. v. 7. vi. 4.

Either, *firſt,* they are to ſhew that we have miſtaken the Scripture, and that he has not the name; or, *ſecondly,* they muſt remove the evidence which ariſes from other places, that this *name* is peculiar to the moſt High. Their way lies fair before 'em, and if what they pretend to was ſo eaſy, they would never turn out of it. Let them ſhew that there's no one name belongs to God in all the Bible, but

SERM. LV. what may be granted to him who by nature is no God. For we can make it evident, that there's not any title under which the Father is mention'd, but ſomewhere elſe it is applied with an undiſtinguiſh'd fulneſs to the Son.

To ſay that it muſt be underſtood with the qualification of *their note*, that the one is a ſupreme, and the other a ſubordinate God, is to take for granted the thing that ought to be prov'd: Either the foundation for ſuch a remark is clear in the Scripture it ſelf, or it is not. If it is, let them ſhew it; if it is not, let us never pretend to make the ſcheme more intelligible than the holy Ghoſt has left it.

The Chriſtian religion has ſubſiſted ſeventeen hundred years without their diſtinction, and ſo it can do ſtill. He who has brought it from the womb will ſecure it to old age. *There are indeed that are* 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. *called gods, as we have gods many and lords many; but to us there is but one God, the Father, and one Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* He is ſo *called* God as no creature can be; and therefore, if Jeſus Chriſt in other places has the title of God given him without any variation of language, we muſt either ſuppoſe him equal to the Father, or that the Scripture leaves us confus'd in a matter where above all other things it ought to be clear. Which would look like a breach of his promiſe, that *we ſhall all know him* Heb. viii. 11. *from the leaſt to the greateſt*; and *Thomas* did know him, when he ſaid, *My Lord, and my God.*

2dly. 'Tis another evidence of this fraud when they will teize us with the diſtinction of a ſupreme and a ſubordinate worſhip. That the duty we owe to parents, to magiſtrates, or any ſuperiors is called *worſhip*, cannot be denied. But certainly *this* alſo is a word which the holy Ghoſt has appropriated to the homage that we pay only to God, and cannot without the fouleſt guilt and danger give to any other. It muſt in ſome places deſcribe an action that can be directed lawfully to none but him that made us. That

That Christ is the Mediator of the correspondence between God and us, and the medium of our approach to him is true enough. But we are not said to worship him when only *by him* we come to the Father. Now the question is, whether he is not frequently held forth as the ultimate object of our faith, our adoration, our inward delight and full dependence. If they say he is not, and that our worship is directed beyond him to a greater than he, let that be tried by matching the Scriptures with one another, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. SERM. LV.

If I was ask'd whether or no I could prove from the Bible that our religious worship should be given to none but God, and whether the Father is the proper object of it, it is easily answer'd. Upon that head we argue very justly, that the words, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*, are as full as any can be. And if they do not command such a temper of mind towards God as we must not have to any one else, they signify nothing at all. Well, the words are as plain, the expressions as full, the command as peremptory with respect to Christ, as they can be to the Father.

Thus when it is said, *Men began to call upon the name of the Lord*; and *whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*; and, *call upon me in the day of trouble and I will hear thee*, I see no more in these strong precepts than I do in others that relate to a Saviour. We read of those who *in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus, both theirs and ours. All the Angels of God worship him. Into thy hands do I commit my spirit, for thou hast redeem'd it, Lord God of truth*, saith *David*, who thus *died in faith. Lord Jesus receive my spirit*, saith *Stephen*, who would have given it to none but one that redeem'd it. *I have redeemed thee, and thou art mine*, saith God to *Israel. Ye are not your own, but bought with*

Gen. iv. 26. Joel ii. 32. Psal. l. 15. 1 Cor. i. 2. Heb. i. 6. Ps. xxxi. 6. Act. vii. 59. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

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with a price, ſaith God by the Apoſtle; and we know *the Lord that bought us, this God who has purchaſed the church with his own blood. Ye believe in God*, ſaith Chriſt, *believe alſo in me.* If he meant only a ſubordinate faith, 'tis no more than any Prophet or Apoſtle might have ſaid as well as he. *He that has begun a good work in you will perform it to the day of Chriſt Jeſus; he that has wrought us for the ſelf ſame thing is God*; and yet *Jeſus is the author and finiſher of our faith.*

Deut. xxxii. 6. Pſ. xx. 28. 2 Pet. ii. 1. Joh. xiv. 1. Phil. i. 6. Heb. xii. 2.

3dly. 'Tis another inſtance of this fraud, when they diſguiſe the queſtion, and tell you our only controverſy is about uncertain ſpeculations which lead a man out of his depth, and make him no better. This was the temper of *Ephraim*, *God wrote to him the great things of his law, but they were counted as a ſtrange thing.*

Thus how roundly is the ſtory told, that "we "are contending whether the Trinity ſhall be un- "derſtood of three infinite minds, and whether they "are diſtinguiſh'd by a ſelf-conſciouſneſs, and that "theſe being only metaphyſical niceties people "have no concern about them." [Though themſelves will keep talking of the Son's being originated, not ſelf-exiſtent, begotten not by neceſſity of nature, but by the will of the Father.] They ſay that Chriſt has left his religion plain and unclouded with ſuch hard words.

You in this aſſembly have now for above two years been entertain'd with diſcourſes on our Lord's Divinity, and are my witneſſes whether the charge againſt us is true or no. Has it been our endeavour to darken the doctrine with barbarous phraſes? Have we not laid it down before you, both in the evidence and the language of Scripture? Have you heard one Sermon that enter'd into an explication, *how* three are one, and one is three? And therefore you know, that ſuch an inſinuation is not arguing but railing.

That

That there is a distinction between Father, Son and holy Spirit is plain, and that it amounts to what we mean by the *word* person among men; the Father is not the Son, nor the Son the Spirit. And yet, that as much is said of the Son's Divinity as of the Father's, I hope has been apparent, *If ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain.* That there is but one God, is as true a proposition as any of the rest. That they *seem* to contradict one another is not denied; but, if they are revealed, if God has indeed given us this account of his own nature, we are to acquiesce in the report, and adore what we cannot explain.

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1 Cor. xv. 2.

So that the question is not whether they are infinite minds, but as a learned author has openly told "'em, *First*, they are to prove either that the Son "is not Creator, or that there are two Creators, "and one of them a creature. *Secondly*, they are "to shew, either that the Son is not to be wor- "ship'd at all, or that there are two objects of "worship, and one of them a creature. *Thirdly*, "they are to prove either that the Son is not God, "or that there are two Gods, and one of them a "creature. *Fourthly*, they are to shew that this "hypothesis is high enough to take in all the "high titles and attributes ascribed to the Son in "Scripture, and at the same time low enough to ac- "count for his increasing in wisdom, not know- "ing the day of judgment, and the like.

The controversy lies in this and nothing else. And though it is indeed a needless dispute to determine what was never reveal'd, the manner of the distinction among the persons, and the union of the nature; yet it is no vain speculation for a Christian to know, in what sense his Saviour is a God, and with what worship he is to be regarded: Because, 'till this point is settled, we cannot steer safe between impiety on the one hand, in with-

holding

SERM. LV. holding worship from the true God, and idolatry on the other, in giving it to a creature. Believing, which is the great act of the soul, will be the most uncertain thing in the world; in it the Christian is doing he knows not what, his faith wanders about for an object, and, like the unclean spirit, is seeking rest and finding none. He knows that Christ in his office is no more than a Mediator, an appointed person, a delegate, a deriving and subordinate agent; but if He is any more than this, 'tis needful we should know it; that we may either be strong in faith, giving glory to him as a God, or not dare on the other hand to trust in one who cannot save.

And can it ever be the business of ministers to keep people in the dark about this matter? When we talk of your *believing in the name of the Lord Jesus*, and bid you *call upon him*, must we not tell you who this Lord Jesus is? If you say, he is the Messiah, is it not as needful a question *what* is the Messiah, as *who* he is?

He is never the more the object of my faith and dependence for the *name*, but for having the perfections that are included in the title. Has the holy Spirit made us ministers of the new Testament, where all's clear, and *with open face we behold the glory of the Lord*, to throw a vail upon our faces when we speak to you? Must we talk of a God and have it undetermined whether he is the author of all things, or an inferior agent? Shall we press the duty of worship, and never let you know what it is, how far it may regard a Saviour, and where it should stop?

No, no, my friends, the Christian religion is no such babble as this conduct would make it. *Wizards may peep and mutter*, but ministers of the Gospel are to speak out. *If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battel?*

1 Cor. xiv. 8, 9, 10, 11.

ſo you, except ye utter by the tongue words eaſie to be underſtood, how ſhall it be known what is ſpoken? ye ſpeak into the air. No voice is without ſignification; but if I know not the meaning of the voice, I ſhall be a barbarian to him that ſpeaks, and he that ſpeaks will be a barbarian to me. If I did think that Jeſus Chriſt and the holy Spirit were not the ſupreme God, equal with the Father, I ſhould not dare to be ſilent; but would take all the reproach that might follow a change of opinions. In this open carriage I have Chriſt himſelf for an example, as well as an object: *He preach'd righteouſneſs, he refrain'd not his lips.* I ſhould think it ſhameful to any diſcourſes of mine, if mankind had a handle to charge me that I left them in the dark: *We uſe great plainneſs of ſpeech.* I am very ſure all truth of this nature, on which ſide ſoever of the queſtion it lies, is by no means to be ſmother'd. I muſt either be treacherous to the Father or to the Son, in ſuffering you to continue in a falſe worſhip.

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2 Cor. iii. 12.

I know it's ſaid, that the cauſe will loſe by being too open, and ſo I believe it will; but that's no argument that it is of God. His doctrine may be ventur'd out into broad daylight; it ſhines upon the mind from the evidence of the Bible; it ſtrikes the conſcience from the importance of the matter. I have no call to diſſemble my concern for the Father's glory, if I think the Son is made equal to him in our carriage, who is not ſo in his own nature: and I'm ſure I need not be afraid to own the dignity of the Son, in all the ſmoke and fire that's rais'd againſt it, if I believe him to be the moſt high God.

Whether we are miſtaken or no, we have not diſſembled with you; but *being manifeſt unto God, I truſt are manifeſt alſo to your conſciences.* We may walk in error, which the *Arians* ſay is an innocent thing,

SERM. LV. thing, (tho' they have no mercy on an error *for* our Lord's Divinity) but ye are our witneſſes that we *have not walk'd in craftineſs*. We handle the word of the Lord imperfectly, as we know but in part, so we propheſie in part; but we have not *handled it deceitfully*. *We are not as many who corrupt the word of God; but as of ſincerity, as of God, in the ſight of God, ſpeak we in Chriſt.*

2 Cor. ii. 17.

2. Another of their arts is this, to pretend all along that the doctrine we ſtrive for has no foundation in Scripture; but that in pleading for the Deity of Chriſt, we only ſet up the authority of councils, and are ſupported by the evidence of creeds and catechiſms and confeſſions. Nay, we are told this is departing from *the Proteſtant principles*.

What a noiſe have we had of reducing our religion to the Bible; as if thus far it had been taken out of ſomething elſe? What outcries againſt theſe ſeveral ways that the churches have us'd to declare the truth as it is in Jeſus, *From whom has ſounded out the word of the Lord, ſo that their faith to Godward is ſpread abroad?* I know it is urg'd by ſome who are but of yeſterday, and have not prepar'd themſelves *to the ſearch of their fathers*, that the antient councils were only aſſemblies of treacherous men, who to ſerve the tricks and deceits of a court had in a fraudulent way been brought together; and that their creeds were nothing elſe but ſo many monuments of their own preſumption, and engines of the emperor's tyranny; that what they have deliver'd as the ſenſe of Scripture is a doctrine that others cannot find there.

This indeed is very freely ſpoken; and I think, tho' your faith has no concern with the authority of any aſſembly, ſynod, convocation, or council in the world, yet unleſs hiſtory has made 'em infamous, their names ſhould not be *taken up as a curſe among*

among us. Let 'em be never so great, I may say *they have in conference added nothing to me.* I have call'd in no help from 'em, *that your faith might not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.* There were two periods of the church, which lie nearer our day; and what happen'd then deserves our greater attention. SERM LV. Gal. ii. 6. 1 Cor. ii. 5.

First, One was that happy time, when God brought about the *reformation* in so many countries at once; when he put it into the heart of the nations with a common heave to throw off the yoke of *Rome. England, Scotland, France, Germany, Denmark, Poland, Sweden, Holland, Saxony,* and several more within a little time of one another, had kings, great men, common people, and vast numbers of all sorts, but the priests, combining in a national way to profess the truth of God, and claim the liberty of men.

You know what a spirit of holiness this work was carried on with, *Many running to and fro, and knowledge increasing.* If ever men were in earnest for the Protestant religion, it was when they lov'd it with their souls, and seal'd it with their blood. Now it is certain, every one of these enlighten'd countries publish'd a confession of their faith. Their princes were not hal'd into it, but *willingly offer'd themselves among the people to subscribe with their hand to the Lord God of Israel.* They were not then of opinion that such human declarations are a departure from the Protestant principle, but rather the first public effect of that principle. Dan. xii. 4. Isa. xliv. 5.

And it is very affecting to see, tho' every country had their phrases, and some confessions are much clearer, fuller, and better worded than others, yet that they all agree in these two doctrines, a Trinity of Persons in the Divine Nature, and an acceptance with God only upon the satisfaction of Christ. How well our generation has refin'd up-

SERM. LV. on the ways theſe Fathers took, whether the Proteſtant principles which they value are accompanied with the ſame principles of courage, ſeriouſneſs, wiſdom and perſeverance, for which the names of our reformers are bleſſed, I muſt leave you to judge:

Job xxxvi. 24, 25. *Do you remember to magnify this work which men behold: every man may ſee it, men may behold it afar off.*

Secondly, Another period, in which the men of God gave themſelves to this work, was chiefly in our nation about fourſcore years ago; I mean the aſſembly of Divines that met at *Weſtminſter*. 'Twas in a dark day that they were call'd together, when the ſcales ſeem'd to ſwing in an uncertain way, whether bondage or liberty ſhould be our lot, Proteſtancy or Popery our profeſſion. At that time there was *diſtreſs of nations with perplexity, mens hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after thoſe things that were coming on the earth.*

There could be no temptation for men to diſſemble then, when a war had begun to rage in the bowels of their nation. And it muſt be own'd there was in theſe days as great an appearance of religion as was ever known in any age or country.

At this time, that learned aſſembly ſat: what we know of the men either from hiſtory, or their own works, makes it evident they were perſons of the brighteſt character for knowledge and piety. And I once expected that the party, who would not ſuffer 'em to be call'd *rebels*, would not riſe againſt 'em as a company of *creed-makers*. From them we have *a confeſſion of faith* that has been receiv'd and admir'd all over the world for the contexture of the work and the perſpicuity of the language, *ſound ſpeech that cannot be condemned.* They alſo publiſh'd a *larger catechiſm*, which though an uneaſie author has thought fit to revile, yet it appears to me the beſt ſummary both of doctrinal and

and practical divinity that is now extant in the world. And of this I would take no other way to convince *you*, than if it is falſe muſt enable you to confute *me*; and that is, to read it carefully over, which I'm afraid many have not done, tho' I do not know, next to the holy Scripture, a better and more needful book in the univerſe. SERM. LV.

Thirdly, Theſe great men gave us alſo *a ſhorter catechiſm*, in which the principles of our religion are drawn up with a conciſeneſs and perſpicuity that I think was never yet exceeded. This indeed is what we have been train'd up in, as the way in which our parents thought we ſhould go; and it's ſtrange that ſome *when they are old* are taking pains to depart from it. Having given you this hiſtory of unconteſted fact, I would obſerve to you theſe few things.

1. That there is not one of all theſe catechiſms or confeſſions that pretends to give us any other than the Scripture-doctrine. They that compil'd 'em profeſs to take their ſentiments out of the Bible. Whether they have done ſo or no, is left to the judgment of every reader. For,

2. The teſtimonies, upon which the doctrine is founded, are publiſh'd along with 'em in moſt of theſe compoſures. I'm ſure they are ſo in all the works of the aſſembly that met at *Weſtminſter*. The Scriptures are inſerted at large; and to ſay they impoſe their ſenſe of the Bible upon all mankind is a notorious falſhood. If their opinions are wrong, themſelves have open'd the way for you to prove 'em ſo: and tho' ſome are determin'd to run us down with a charge that we make the catechiſm the ſtandard of truth, there is not a child that repeats it but can tell whether he has learnt the PROOFS or no; and by the proofs they never mean any thing but the Scriptures.

So

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So univerſal and public is the evidence, that the catechiſm itſelf is to be *prov'd*, and carries all the credentials it pretends to in the view of every one that reads it.

And therefore, it had been fairer in the adverſary, to have ſhewn us that the expreſſions there do not contain the *ſenſe* of Scripture, than to trifle with telling us they are not the *words* of Scripture. If theſe propoſitions, "there are three Perſons in "the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the holy "Ghoſt; and theſe three are one God, the ſame "in ſubſtance, equal in power and glory," are any of 'em falſe, we may juſtly diſown 'em; but every one of 'em is ſurrounded with ſentences out of the Bible.

'Tis true, the work was compos'd by fallible men; they were not inſpir'd in forming the ſixth anſwer, and if it does not agree with the word of God, if the Scriptures they bring as a proof do not ſuffice, let us ſhew the weakneſs of the conſequence, and not make a clamour that theſe were *fallible* men, that they *might be* deceiv'd, but ſhew that they were *erroneous* men, and actually *are* deceiv'd. Every propoſition is either true or falſe, whatever language it is put into; and whether it expreſſes my conceptions in the beſt way or no, yet as far as I underſtand the words, I can tell whether I think it agreeable to the book of God.

3. I appeal to every one of you who have been my witneſſes for the ſpace of more than two years, that no human authority has ever once been inſinuated as an argument of your believing that *God was manifeſt in the fleſh*. And therefore they that charge it upon us may well be ask'd, whether or no they have heard us put your faith upon creeds and confeſſions? if they ſay they have, you know it is talking againſt plain fact; and they appear to be a ſett of people who *love and make a lye*. If they

they have not, they only publiſh a ſinful impertinence, and ought to be had in the contempt that is due to thoſe, *who underſtand not what they ſay, nor whereof they affirm.* For my part, I read every confeſſion and creed, as I do any other work, as an evidence how far the author is acquainted with the Scriptures. They are no other than methodical ſummaries of the truth as it is in Jeſus. If they vary from the law and the teſtimony, *'tis because there's no light in 'em. Therefore ſearch the Scriptures daily, whether the things are ſo or no.* SERM. LV. Iſa. viii. 20. Acts xvii. 11.

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July 31, 1720.

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3. THIS a very common vanity among thoſe who ſet themſelves againſt the Lord and his anointed, to call their ſcheme by the name of *free-thinking*, and repreſent thoſe that do not run aſtray with them, as a dull ſort of people, who have ſlid into their opinions by education, take every thing upon truſt, and have no other reaſon to believe as they do, but only becauſe their fathers or their teachers have done ſo before 'em. The Apoſtle adviſes *Timothy* to be upon his guard againſt this ſett of men: *Keep what is committed to thy truſt, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppoſition of a falſly call'd ſcience, which ſome profeſſing concerning the faith have erred.* 1 Tim. vi. 20, 21.

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Under this head I may bring in the haughty temper that has without either thought or ſhame given the brand of *Enthuſiaſm* to the faith which has been own'd by the harmonious confeſſions of ſo many churches. That they go on with this diſdain of thoſe that will not follow 'em, as men of no critical learning, no generous principles, no ſolid reaſon, is notorious from their books and all their converſation. Thus they *caſt abroad the rage of their wrath.* Upon which I ſhall give you theſe few remarks.

(1.) 'Tis no great argument that the cauſe has much foundation, when the men have ſo little humility. We do not find pride and vain-glory among thoſe ſigns of an Apoſtle, by which *they approv'd themſelves to be the miniſters of Chriſt.* When they take the title of *free-thinkers,* 'tis an appropriation of a great name to themſelves, and can be no evidence that God has either call'd 'em or fitted 'em to the edification of mankind: *Knowledge puffs up, but it is charity that edifies; if any man thinks that he knows any thing, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know.*

1 Cor. viii. 1, 2.

I had rather be among thoſe whom theſe polite people deſpiſe for madmen, *Enthuſiaſts,* and whatever they pleaſe to call 'em, than be like *Leviathan,* a *king over the children of pride.* I could have no envy at ſuch as *Job* complains of, *No doubt ye are the people, and wiſdom ſhall die with you.* Tho' he ſpeaks the very thought that ſome perſons have of themſelves, yet 'tis not much to their advantage when he adds, *I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calls upon God, and he hears him, the juſt upright man is laughed to ſcorn.*

Job xii. 2. ver. 4.

And that contempt with which they ſpeak of the good men that are gone before us, does but fairly bring 'em within all the deſcriptions that *Agur* throws together: *There is a generation that curſes*

their

their father, and does not bleſs their mother: there is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not waſh'd from their filthineſs: there is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes, and their eyelids are lifted up! there is a generation whoſe teeth are as ſwords, and their jaw-teeth as knives to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men. 'Twas with quite another ſpirit that they who ſerv'd God in the Goſpel of his Son went abroad thro' the nations; not like the wicked *whoſe ways are always grievous, God's judgments are far above out of his ſight: as for his enemies he puffs at 'em; his mouth is full of curſing, deceit, and fraud.* Such a temper would never have done with ſuch a cauſe. SERM. LVI. Prov. xxx. 11, 12, 13, 14. Pſ. x. 5, 7.

God fits men to his Goſpel both in their knowledge and in their frame; he never makes *grapes to grow on thorns, nor figs on thiſtles; by their fruits ye ſhall know 'em.* The Apoſtles had a great deal of care upon this head, to *give no offence that the miniſtry be not blamed.* One of 'em fought at *Epheſus* with beaſts after the manner of men, yet *they knew from the firſt time that he came into Aſia, after what manner he had been with 'em at all ſeaſons, ſerving the Lord with all humility of mind, and many tears, keeping back nothing that was profitable for 'em.* He was with the *Corinthians in weakneſs, fear and much trembling.* To the *Theſſalonians* he profeſſes the humility of his carriage, as well as the truth of his doctrine: *Neither of men ſought we glory, neither of you nor of others, but we were gentle among you, even as a nurſe cheriſhes her children; ye are witneſſes and God alſo, how holily, juſtly, and unblameably we behav'd ourſelves among you that believe. The wiſdom that is from above is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle, and eaſie to be intreated.* You may be ſure that the wiſdom is no higher than earthy, that is no better than ſenſual and devi- Acts xx. 18, 19, 20. 1 Cor. ii. 3. 1 Theſ. ii. 6, 7, 10. Jam. iii. 17.

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lish, that delivers its notions in gross language, and pursues them with a haughty spirit.

Every wise man is a free-thinker; he desires to use the talents that God has given him, and would improve the light of other people, not to obscure but to assist his own. And therefore they who deny you that title throw a reproach upon your nature. There must be a great deal of *stupidity* in you to deserve this usage, or a great deal of *conceit* in them to give it.

(2.) As to the charge of *Enthusiasm* and folly, the shame of it does not so frequently fall on those that receive it as it retorts upon them that give it. 'Twas not the impudence of *Festus* that prov'd *Paul* to be mad, tho' it call'd him so, when *he spake the words of truth and soberness.* What he writes to the *Corinthians* will let you into the opinion they had of him: *Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little: ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.* Such a temper ought to be treated with a disdain.

Acts xxvi. 24.

2 Cor. xi. 16, 19.

The charge of *Enthusiasm* has been lately advanc'd against a book writ in defence of the Trinity, and which I perceive is only to be answer'd by *gnashing of teeth.* The party seems to be cut to the heart with it. Here's no pretence that they have mistaken the meaning of one Scripture, that they have either blunder'd or shuffled in their arguments. But the author has given a bold fling of scandal, that will affect any other doctrine as well as that of the Trinity, *viz.* that certainty in matters of faith is all *Enthusiasm.* And if so, as our martyrs died for they knew not what, so they died as fools do. But we know *they overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony, when they lov'd not their lives to the death.*

Rev. xii. 11.

'Tis

'Tis hard, that people should be so free of a character to those who they think are wrong, when themselves say none can be sure of their being right. However, when an author has a mind to write against something, and dare not attack what he pretends to answer, he must give battel to his own imagination. The *Enthusiam*, which he sets out to the contempt of the world, is describ'd by "a man's *not leaning to his own understanding*, being "taught of God, having the witness of the Spi- "rit with his own spirit, feeling the evidence and "power of religion upon his soul." And, as these are the things that he means by it, may I ever have grace enough to be an *Enthusiast*; may that, which is the matter of his sport, be the subject of my experience and veneration, and then all sides will be pleas'd; some with a satisfaction of what they have, and others with a profane laughter at what they have not. SERM. LVI.

(3.) 'Tis all a slander upon the truth, and those that own it, to say that the reason of our faith is the wisdom of men. Whatever value we have for those that are gone before us, yet believing must be our own act, and the effect of an evidence within ourselves. There's a vast deal of difference between saying of former generations that they *may be wrong*, and giving out the sentence that they *were so*. We bring what they have done to the rule that God has given us; and this without any reproach, because it was also a rule to them. But certainly, unless they were made standards of truth, there's no occasion to stun the world with perpetual outcries against 'em. If their opinions were wrong, the best way is to shew it, bring 'em to the light that they may be reprov'd.

Consider who they are that these men set so much at nought; and that they may not fail to strike home at the faith, they insult the people

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that own'd it. Perhaps indeed the miniſters and profeſſors of the laſt age were moſt of 'em gone off, before the men that now arraign 'em had appear'd; yet there are ſeveral among you old enough to know, that however they may be exceeded in what is now call'd politeneſs, yet as to a thorow ſenſe of religion, an obſervation of the Lord's day, an acquaintance with Scripture, a contempt of the world, and, I will add, an unſelfiſh love of their country, they are far from being equal'd by the raw fraternity that now deſpiſe 'em.

They own'd God in their lives, and God own'd them at their deaths. And tho' it would be an exceſs to ſet 'em up as ſtandards of truth, yet there is ſome duty owing to that exhortation: *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have ſpoken unto you the word of God, whoſe faith follow, conſidering the end of their converſation.* And what's that? *Jeſus the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever.* Their rule over you did not call for any blind obedience; what they ſpake to you was the word of God, and therefore follow their faith with regard to that, conſidering the end of their converſation, the end that they aim'd at, and the end that they arriv'd to.

Heb. xiii. 7, 8.

What they had in view was to promote the honour of Jeſus; not merely his honour as a man or Mediator, but that which gives a holineſs to the one, and an importance to the other, his being the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever. Whatever lower opinions they held, yet in this they were ſteddy, Presbyterians congregational and Baptiſts agreed in their confeſſions of faith. In the profeſſion of this truth they mov'd quite thro' the road of life; nay, in the ſweetneſs of it they mov'd into another life.

A ſenſe of *the infinite evil of ſin* kept them always humble, and preſerved upon their minds a powerful eſteem

esteem of the redemption that was equal to it. They would never bear a doctrine which made a little matter of *that* that cost the Son of God so dear. They fled with joy to Christ as the propitiation for their guilt, and to him as their God and portion for ever. With these professions they kept up their duty and at last breathed out their souls. SERM. LVI.

Can we suppose God would suffer people, who were so afraid of displeasing him and had run every hazard for his glory, to live and die in a dangerous delusion, to adore the Son who is no more than a God by office, and not only so, but to worship the Spirit who is no God at all? Shall the best of Christians be upon a level with the worst of heathen, who *worship and serve the creature more than the Creator?* Were they that confess'd their need of the Spirit, and were always praying for his assistance, and who admired his testimony (were they) in an error, when they thought him to be God? And is the truth of his *being* reveal'd to the men that laugh at his *operations?* Is he best known among those to whom his very name is a jest? Has he instructed them whom he never sanctified? Is he most liberal of his gifts to those who do most despise him? Are the people that profane his name greater favourites than those that adore it?

We should never have enter'd into a comparison of mens characters, if there had not risen up among us a sett of people who talk of their pious fathers with disdain, though they ought to mention their names with blushing. 'Twas by the faith which their sons set at nought, that *those elders obtain'd a good report.* And may I be one of them who by the same faith and patience are following those that now inherit the promises.

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4. That must be a poor cause that's to be serv'd by false quotations. Passages are brought out of books directly opposite to the design of the authors. *False witnesses rise up against them, and lay to their charge things that they know not.* Of these I have lately given several examples in a publick work, which has had the most natural effect upon the guilty. For a troubled sea can send forth nothing but *mire and dirt.* False teachers are in the new Testament compared to *raging waves of the sea foaming out their own shame.*

I will give you another instance from the same author. In one of his pamphlets he presents us with a passage from Dr. *Manton* on the 11th of the *Hebrews*, "Christians need not to puzzle themselves about conceiving of three in one, and one in three; let them in this manner come unto God and it suffices, make God the object and Christ the means of access, and look for help from the Spirit." This quotation he has placed on the title page of his book, that he might be sure of catching the great numbers that will look no farther.

Those words in the valuable works from which he has taken them come in as an answer to the scruples of good men. They know not how to conceive of three persons, and cannot order their speech by reason of darkness. This difficulty becomes a temptation: now the Doctor tells 'em, that they need not puzzle themselves about that MANNER of the union and distinction in the Divine Nature which was never fully reveal'd. Any one may see he was then speaking to the distress of a wounded conscience and not to the caprice of a wanton *Arian.*

Now if this passage does the author any service, who has empal'd it in his own little book, it must signify either that Dr. *Manton* did not believe the

the doctrine to be true, or that he did not take it to be of any importance. But the author knew both these insinuations to be false. For in his sermons on the same text [he that comes unto God must believe that he is] that honest uncorrupted writer is express enough of his own opinion, *p.* 211. "He that comes unto God must believe that he "is, that is, so as he has revealed himself, one in "three persons; for otherwise we worship an idol "and that which is not God: We form an idol "when we think of God out of the Trinity;" and *p.* 214. "he bids us prize orthodoxy, and above "all see ye be right in the point of belief; there "are a sort of libertines risen up, that think our "debates with *Socinians* and *Arians* are but vain "and frivolous, and that a loose belief of God and "Christ is enough. But if this general faith be "enough, why has God reveal'd so many things "that we might have been ignorant of?"

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And when he gives rules about fellowship, he is so positive as to say, "We cannot be saved ex- "cept we hold one God in three persons, and Je- "sus as Mediator. These are supreme truths that "are clearly reveal'd and propounded to our faith:", And *p.* 272. "To frame fit notions concerning the "Trinity, that there are three persons in one God- "head, this is a mystery to be believed not dis- "puted, and committed to the anxious traversty of "our own reasons." Upon this case I will observe a few things.

1.) 'Tis of no great weight to any opinion who they are that receiv'd it. That's not our rule, we go upon a higher authority than what is human. The learning, the piety, the numbers of those who have espoused any doctrine are but a lower reason for us to embrace it. But

2.) 'Tis unfair to give out men as advocates for a notion, when we our selves know they were ene-

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mies to it. It's a reproach upon their names, and *God will arise to make inquisition* for scandal as well as for blood. It's using them like the two witnesses, whose *dead bodies* will be exposed by a barbarous world. That's a great inhumanity, but methinks it's a viler insult upon their memories to make them say what they never thought of. Certainly these writers don't remember that the Saints shall judge the world, who take a liberty to abuse them by whole generations, as if it was not enough to bring *a lying accusation* against the living unless they did it also against the dead. But as these great men died in the Lord, and rest from their labours, so their works shall follow them, not to reproach, but *to praise them in the gates.*

3.) That pretence that the truth is *extorted* from these people; that tho' they have writ for the commonly received faith, yet they are forced to own, that the evidence lies against them, (this accusation) proves a notorious want of modesty in him that brings it. The supposition is, that Dr. *Owen* and Dr. *Manton*, who were persons of the first rank, the one for a scholar, and the other for a preacher, (that these) could not write for a doctrine without dropping something against it. Now that turns upon one of these two things.

Either they knew that the opinion they maintain'd was false, or they did not; if they *did*, it was a breach of their integrity: if they *did not*, it's a publick evidence of their folly, that a writer in the next generation shall understand 'em better than they did themselves. Neither of these things shall I easily allow, upon the names of those eminent servants of Christ; and therefore there's a third inference, which I'll leave any one to make, who hears the case.

4.) 'Tis using mankind very ill to put such things upon us. It may be all one to me, what such

such a *Doctor* saith about the Divinity of Christ. His opinion is neither the argument nor the hindrance of my faith, but however let me not be imposed on in matter of fact. Let us not have deceitful reports; *no lie is of the truth.* If the doctrine I am contending for be right, it will be so without fathers or doctors; but why should I make a false muster, both to wrong the dead and abuse the living? *Let such froward hearts depart from you, do not know those wicked persons; whoso privily slanders his neighbour* cut off from your acquaintance. Psal. ci. 4, 5.

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And since I am upon this head, a certain author has obliged me by his demand both to do him and my self justice in a quotation I gave you out of his book. I was indeed offended at the phrase of a deriv'd and a dependent God, and having laid before you some loose expressions upon that head from others, I was troubled to find him among these unguarded writers. The Passage I mention'd was this, after he had directed us to pray to Christ, he adds, "'Tis true he is the begotten of the Father, and sent of the Father, and the Father is "greater than he, and the head of Christ is God; "the Son of God derives from the Father, and is "not properly self-existing." Thus far I went, and did not imagine there was any occasion of going farther.

But as he is pleased to think we are unfaithful in stopping there, I will give you the rest of the sentence. His next words are these; "but then "if it be allowed a necessary derivation tho' infinitely free as the rays of the light from the sun, "and not merely arbitrary and at pleasure, which "might never have been, it is sufficient to justify the "great things said of him, and secure all that we "intend, namely that he is *above the level of the "most exalted creature.*" This I am afraid is far from mending the matter. For

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First, He comprehends both the parts of the question that us'd to be always opposite; whether the generation of the Son is *voluntary* or of *necessity*, he supposes both, which, as the terms are us'd in that dispute, I think makes a contradiction; because what is *necessary* in that sense cannot be *free*. By necessary we mean that which *must have been*, by free that which *might not have been*.

Secondly, It's a very rash way of talking, to suppose any necessity upon the divine will, because it makes it cease to be an act of the will, it leaves God himself at no liberty; here's one said to be deriv'd from another, and yet was necessary to him. This is bold ungodly language.

Thirdly, If raising him *above the level* of the most exalted creature is all he intends, I can assure him it's not all that we intend. It is a *true* account, but a very *low* one of the great God, that he is above any creature; and, though it us'd to be always said, that he who is not a creature is God, yet as some have run into a wild imagination and as wild a conduct, that will neither say the Son is a God nor a creature, ministers that would not keep people in the dark, are obliged to speak out. For according to the position that may be called the *nostrum* of our polite age, a being may be above the level of the most exalted creature, and yet not be the supreme God. I see *contradictions* will pass, though *mysteries* cannot.

5.) Tho' I never did, and never dare recommend any holy men to you as having dominion over your faith, yet do not suffer them to be treated injuriously, both as fools and knaves; they have deserved better of their generation, whom they serv'd according to the will of God: and when you compare what is said of them with what they say

say of themselves, their enemies will be found liars. SERM. LVI.

The design of Satan in running down the faith of such great men is to give the world a distaste of their holiness. Throwing off their opinions is an introduction to the dropping of their practice. The Lord's-day goes away with the catechism. Men that are called enthusiasts in their doctrine are no better in their devotion; and if *thinking* as they did not is called coming back to the Bible, *acting* as they did not may pass for a politer sort of religion. But——may my soul be found with those whom these men despise, for, I doubt not, they are *among the living in Jerusalem.*

5. Their desiring that the doctrines of Christianity may be delivered in no other words but those of Scripture is what I called a stale artifice, and has been exploded as a mere fraud in all ages. 'Tis a pretence as old as the *Arians*, and it's pity that they who reviv'd it have not thought it worth their while to clear themselves of having the same design with those that us'd it only as a shuffle. For,

1.) It was never their own practice. They continually run into *metaphysical* phrases, or *cabbalistical* notions, that is, either the vain janglings of the heathen, or the filthy dreams of the *Jews*. A learned historian tells us, when they swell'd in councils and swarm'd in nations, they had no less than four or five creeds in the space of a few years. They were unstable in all their ways, *ever learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth. Clouds without water* must be carried about with wind.

And are these in our day any better? Will any of them allow me to be of the same opinion with the author of the Scripture-doctrine of the Trinity, or less mistaken, because I am willing to subscribe all the Scriptures that he brings, and leave his propositions

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positions to himself? No, I know this will never do; and therefore they expect, either that I do not call Christ God, or that I talk of an originated Deity that is not self-existent. My orthodoxy with them is not determined by adhering to the phrases of the Bible, but controlling them with a sett of impious distinctions.

One of them, who declared against the equality of the Son to the Father, was willing in a publick assembly to confess, that *he is over all God blessed for evermore.* What a trifling is this with sacred words? How evident is it, that to *the unbelieving there is nothing pure?* The *unstable,* as well as the *unlearned, wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction.* Every one knows that the text I have now mention'd is usually pleaded for our Lord's supreme Divinity; and is it not defrauding and going beyond my neighbour, when I give him those words as an expression of my own opinion, which I am sure he takes in a different sense from what I do? What is that but *sporting my self with his deceivings?* But *the Lord is the avenger of all such.* The righteous Lord loves righteousness. Ministers of the Gospel are *not to walk in craftiness, nor handle the word of the Lord deceitfully, but by a manifestation* (not a concealment) *of the truth recommend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*

2 Pet. iii. 16.

2 Cor. iv. 2.

2.) This is no more than a papist may do in the great fundamental of their idolatry, I mean *transubstantiation.* Against this, all the protestant churches at the time of the reformation declar'd with one voice. Now, according to the pretence of this new scheme there's not any assembly but what may have a Jesuit for their pastor. If I desire he will satisfy me about his faith, he confidently tells me that's an *Inquisition,* and giving up the liberty that he has in Christ Jesus. If I insist upon it to know what his sentiments are about the great dividing

point

point between us and those of *Rome*, he saith it is a *mystery*, and ought to be delivered in no other than Scripture-language; and he will affirm neither more nor less than that Christ has said, *This is my body*. If I ask him in what sense he takes that expression, whether proper or figurative, he runs out into declamations against words which man's wisdom teaches, and charges me with taking him away from his Bible, and setting up human decisions as standards in matters of faith. SERM. LVI.

I have carefully thought over that argument, and with all the turning I can give it, it appears to me as well calculated for a *Jesuit* as an *Arian*, and perhaps a little time may shew, it is design'd for 'em both. This trick produc'd rank popery in *Poland*, and it plainly gives the enemy the same advantage in *England*.

3.) You know, and so do they too, though they will not own it, that the Scripture is the only plea we use for the doctrine we maintain, and I hope our sermons are not much inferior to theirs in Scripture-language and Bible-phrases. This pretence is what every enemy of the christian church has made in all ages. It leaves the door open for the great invaders of our liberty, to come in upon us as a flood. They that have most advanced it in our day have made depredations upon the Bible; and therefore we look upon it as the work of spies, who *come to see the liberty that we have in Christ, and bring us into bondage*. Gal. ii. 4.

Aug. 14. 1720.

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6. WE shall now consider the pretence wherein they glory, that their scheme is to promote a christian *charity* and mutual forbearance. In this, like those of old, they have seduc'd the people, crying, *Peace, peace, where there was no peace, one built up a slight wall, and lo others daub'd it with untemper'd mortar.* We have heard speeches deliver'd with a great deal of flat formality, in praise of that which every man professes to admire, and every believer has the seeds of in himself. The holy Spirit implants it in the hearts of his own people, and therefore it is a publick evidence of our interest in Christ, by which all men will know that we are his disciples, when we *have love one to another.*

Ezek. xiii. 10.

But *when shall vain words have an end?* Has the Scripture said so many things of brotherly love, only to express the rancour of those that want it? Is talking over a precept to pass for obedience to it? Are those glorious things that we read of charity to furnish the language of reproach, and help us to rail in the name of the Lord? How vile and foolish is it on this occasion, to cool our zeal for the truth by crying up the happiness of union or the necessity of peace?

Who would imagine that when we plead for the faith that was once deliver'd to the saints, any preachers

preachers of the Gospel should tell us, that an agreement with them that deny it is of more importance than a contending for it, and support their opinion by these words of the Apostle, *Tho' I understand all mysteries, and have all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains and have not charity, it profits me nothing*; and as he saith afterwards, *Now abides faith, hope, charity; but the greatest of these three is charity.* SERM. LVII. 1 Cor. xiii. 2. ver. 13.

Because these are some of the *feigned words* with which they make merchandise of you, and those *fair speeches* that deceive the hearts of the simple, I will lead you into the vanity of the argument by a few considerations. You will see that the Scriptures they bring in to advance charity above faith are nothing at all to the purpose; that there is no other charity but what is founded upon an agreement in the faith, and all the exhortations to it in the Bible suppose that we equally hold the head; that we are sufficiently directed with what tenderness to use those who wander from the truth without giving up one article of religion; and that there are not perhaps in the world more notorious breaches of charity than among the very party that make such a noise about it. From them that consent not to wholesom words, and the doctrine which is according to godliness, we have examples of men who *know nothing, but are proud, doting about questions and strifes of words*; and they have shewn themselves in *envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, and perverse disputings*, as if they supposed that *gain was godliness*. From them have come these foolish and unlearned questions that do gender strifes. 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4, 5. 2 Tim. ii. 23.

(1.) The Scripture which they would reproach us with will leave them short of their design. Why should we be told with vain repetitions that the Apostle has said, *Though I understand all mysteries, and have all faith, and have not charity, it pro-*

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fits me nothing? Can any one get leave of his own reaſon to imagine that he deſigns to make an oppoſition between the myſteries of the Goſpel and the precepts of the law, between the faith, *without which it is impoſſible to pleaſe God*, and the charity that governs our carriage to his people?

Heb. xi. 6.

No, no, he is not here ſpeaking of the great myſtery of godlineſs, or with any leſſening to that which was the continual ſubject of his own miniſtry. To talk of *underſtanding theſe* myſteries is a contradiction, they belong to thoſe *deep things* that will never be fully comprehended. But the myſteries that are inferior to charity are of a different nature, becauſe it's here ſuppoſed that a hypocrite may have 'em. Such a knowledge and skill as God gave to *Daniel* and his companions, in learning and wiſdom, underſtanding viſions and dreams.

And ſo, when he ſuppoſes a man to have *all faith* and not have charity, it cannot without violence to the words be expounded of ſaving faith; but as he himſelf declares it, a faith to *remove mountains*, that is, a power of working miracles. This people may have; as our Lord aſſures us many ſhall ſay in the laſt day, *Have we not wrought wonders in thy name*, and yet he profeſſes I never knew you.

But it would be impious to ſuppoſe that a perſon may have the faith of God's elect, and yet want charity. For if faith is right, it will *work by love. He that believes with the heart and confeſſes with the mouth that Jeſus died and that he is rais'd from the dead, he is born of God; and they that have purified their ſouls in obeying the truth thro' the ſpirit,* have done it *to an unfeigned love of the brethren. If any man hates his brother, he abides in darkneſs*, he is no believer; the truth has never ſhone into his ſoul.

Rom. xiv. 10. 1 Joh. v. 1. 1 Pet. i. 23.

Charity indeed is greater than a notional faith, or what we call the faith of miracles; but to ſay

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it is greater than a belief of the truth, is only preferring the branches to the root. Our love to him that begat, is the principle and guide *of our love to those who are begotten of him*, and there's no other love to him but what arises from our believing in him; and there's no other believing in him but what takes into it the consent and acquiescence of the soul in the report that is given of him. SERM. LVII. 1 Joh. v. 1.

(2.) There can be no charity but what is founded upon an agreement in the faith. I own that the name of charity is not always us'd under the same extent in Scripture: Sometimes it signifies the benevolence that we have to all the world; and this seems to be the meaning of the word, when it is distinguish'd from *brotherly kindness*. I do not take it in that sense here, for it is certain, an agreement in the faith is no condition of that temper; we must do good to all men, whether they are believers or no; we consider them, not as having obtained like precious faith, but as partaking of the same common nature. Religion will teach a person to look upon himself as a brother to the whole world, and sets before his eyes the example of a heavenly Father who causes his rain to fall, and his sun to shine upon the good and the evil, the just and the unjust; and it is so far from making an union to Christ the foundation of our good will to men, that we are to *bless those that curse us*, though in that they are guilty of cursing him, *to love them that hate us, and pray for such as despitefully use us, and persecute us.* This is certainly one sense of the word charity, and it holds out our duty to mankind in general; we must *give no offence to the Jew or the Gentile or the church of God*, but be *harmless and blameless as the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom we are as lights in the world.* I hope none will thus understand the head I am now upon. Mat. v. 44. 1 Cor. x. 31. Phil. ii. 16.

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But, *secondly*, when we speak of charity in a narrower way, as that which is the glory of our religion, it is not distinguished from brotherly kindness, but only another name for it. It signifies a due temper of mind to the people of God: making the saints in the earth to *be the excellent in whom is all our delight*; that we are *companions of all them that fear God, and of them that keep his precepts. We love one another as Christ has loved us* and them. *As touching this brotherly love believers have no need that any write to them, for themselves are taught of God to love one another, and indeed they do it towards all the brethren.*

Psal. xvi. 3. cxix. 63. Joh. xiii. 34. 1 Thess. iv. 9, 10.

Now this, I say, supposes our agreement in the faith, and without that it is not the duty that God has commanded, nor an effect of that grace that his Spirit has quickened. But then by this agreement I do not mean our having the same thoughts about every doctrine of religion; no, that is not only impossible, but the variety that is among us gives a beauty to the christian life.

There are many expressions of charity which suppose our opinions are not taken from one mould, such as *forbearing one another*, overlooking a little difference, speaking of it as God himself does, that *circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but a keeping the commandments of God.*

But then what the Apostle calls *holding the head* is the ground of all our regard to the brethren. Without *the unity of the spirit* there is *no bond of peace.* The persons whom we thus love are with us under *one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one body, one spirit, one hope of our calling.* We are *built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together grows to a holy temple in the Lord.* In order to the course of this love, there must be a mutual profession. *Our faith in*

Eph. iv. 3, 4, 5. Eph. ii. 20, 21. Col. i. 4.

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the Lord Jesus Christ is joined with a *love to all* SERM. *the saints*. He that will not tell me what he be- LVII. lieves, has no other demand upon my charity than a heathen man or a publican.

I'm to do him good as I have opportunity whether he is a Christian or no, but it is supposed I must know him to be a disciple, before I can love him as one. When the Apostle says, *Above* 1 Pet. iv. 8. *all things have fervent charity among your selves.* Does he mean no more than what I am obliged to have for all mankind? And is there any difference between a brother and a stranger, but what arises from an external profession? Have I any other rule for a mutual love besides what appears? Can I judge a person to be in the faith unless I hear it? Or can I suppose him to be in a state of holiness, unless I see it? To say that I have no concern whether any one believes right or wrong about the great doctrines of Christianity, is to say I must have no charity for them. Thrusting them out of my care is excluding them from my delight; it makes me uncapable of walking with them, rejoicing over them, provoking them to love and good works, and so much the more as we see the day approaching. When the Apostle *John* tells the elect Lady and her children, that he *loved them in* 2 Joh. i. 2. *the truth, and not only he, but all they that had known the truth, for the truth's sake which dwells in us, and shall be with us for ever*, was there no difference between his regard to such as these and those that *did not abide* in the doctrine of Christ? and must he be charged with a breach of charity, when he directs, that *if any come to us and bring* ver. 10. *not this doctrine, we are not to receive him into our houses, nor bid him God speed; for he that bids him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds?* Every one sees not only that he distinguished these two sorts, but the foundation of his doing so. The reason of

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his love to the former was their being *in the truth*, it was *for the sake* of that; and yet tho' Christians are to use hospitality one to another, they are ordered not to receive some into their houses because they *bring not this doctrine*.

Was *Paul* advising *Timothy* against the rules of charity when he bid him beware of *Alexander* who had *greatly withstood his words?* Was it a schismatical practice for him to *turn away from those that resisted the truth, and were reprobate concerning the faith?* Or when a man consented not to wholesome words, *from such a one to withdraw himself?*

Neither charity nor faith are to be what men of corrupt minds will make them. The Scripture in giving us rules about them has made the matter visible enough. There's no cloud upon that text but what the lust of our own hearts has brought thither. *I beseech you mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine that ye have heard and avoid them.* They that plead for charity *without* faith, and especially *against* it, are only taking pains for a plant that our heavenly Father has not planted. The Apostles were limited, and so must we be, *We can do nothing against the truth but for the truth.* How earnestly does he desire that we may *stand fast in one spirit with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel?*

Rom. xvi. 17.

2 Cor. xiii. 8.

Phil. i. 17.

(3.) We are sufficiently directed how tenderly to use those that wander from the truth without giving up the honour of one doctrine or article to them. The servant of God must *in meekness instruct those that oppose themselves*; and what is it for? *That God may give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth.* Must not people be under the power of a perverse mind that will use this Scripture against our zeal for the faith? 'Tis true, the servants of God are not to strive by furious methods, by corporal punishments, or any gross severities,

2 Tim. ii. 25.

rities, but be gentle to all men, what they do should be in meekneſs. But then,

Firſt, He muſt *inſtruct* 'em; this rule does not oblige him to hold his peace. There's nothing at all in it oppoſite to his inſiſting upon ſound doctrine; nay, his doing it at a time that *they will not endure* it. 'Tis no breach of this meekneſs, if *he reprov'd 'em ſharply, that they might be ſound in the faith.* He muſt not be ſilent, and neglect to inſtruct 'em, and call either his lazineſs or his cowardiſe by the name of meekneſs.

Secondly, This is neceſſary in order to a divine bleſſing; he does it in hopes that God will give 'em *repentance.* But he that is ſilent when the doctrine of Chriſtianity is oppos'd has no hopes that God will give 'em repentance; he does not uſe the means in order to it. God *may* give it immediately as he did to *Saul*; but we cannot expect a perſon ſhould be reclaim'd, who is not ſo much as admoniſh'd. *Brethren*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *if any of you err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he who turns a ſinner from the error of his way ſhall ſave a ſoul from death, and hide a multitude of ſins.* This is an honorary name put upon our endeavours. We are not able to convert an unbeliever; but God has given our zeal ſuch a reputation, to ſhew the value he has for any pains we take in order to it. Jam. v. 19, 20.

Thirdly, This repentance that we pray and hope for in theſe that now oppoſe themſelves is, that they *acknowledge* the truth; not only believe it, but acknowledge it. We muſt look upon 'em as impenitent till there is a public confeſſion. And,

Fourthly, 'Till they do this, they remain *in the ſnare of the Devil, and are led captive by him at his pleaſure.* And is it any charity to leave 'em there? Is not our ſilence to 'em upon this head an argument that we had rather have 'em pleas'd than

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Jude 22.

sav'd, and are watching for their favour, and not for their souls? A true *compassion* would teach us *with fear to pull 'em out of the fire.*

'Tis certain, the rules of Christianity do not clash with one another. The way of the Lord is perfect, and therefore no command in the Bible was ever design'd to raise out that: *My son, cease to hear the instruction that causes to err from the words of knowledge.* No charitable thoughts can excuse our neglect of *trying the spirits whether they be of God.* We are told of some whose *words do eat as a canker*, and tho' we must be courteous to all men, yet that cannot take off the plain declaration of the Apostle, *If a man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel of honour to the master's use.*

Prov. xix. 27.

1 Joh. iv. 1.

2 Tim. ii. 17, 21.

(4.) As when men talk of truth, so when they talk of charity, bring 'em to the law and to the testimony, 'tis not making a noise with a word that will do. There is no more in the cry of peace, than there is in that of the church. The charity that the Apostle recommends has plain and glorious characters belonging to it; and whenever they are wanting, the pretensions of men are in vain: *Charity suffers long, and is kind; it envies not, vaunts not itself, is not puffed up.* If you see a man deal in proud wrath, he may call himself as he pleases, but *proud and haughty scorner* is the name that God has given him.

1 Cor. xiii. 4.

ver. 5.

Charity does not behave itself unseemly; scurrilous dirty language is no more charity than it's decency; it *seeks not its own, is not easily provok'd, thinks no evil*, much less does it take pains to form evil; straining to torture words, setting 'em out to the worst light we can, has as little of charity as it has of honesty. But then, it's the glory of charity that, as it *rejoices not in iniquity*, so *it rejoices in the truth.* It's far from hating and opposing the truth.

ver. 6.

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God never made any grace to be a rebel against any doctrine; he never made a Saint to pull revelation in pieces; practical religion is far from being an enemy to the Bible; and therefore that's an ungodly charity that works up an intrenchment to those that deny the faith, and a battery against them that own it. But as the day is coming that *wisdom* shall be justified of all her children, so shall *charity* too; for we would *so speak and so do, as they that shall be judg'd by the law of liberty.* SERM. LVII. Jam. ii. 8.

7. The most powerful of all their arts is the contempt with which they speak of mysteries and the worship of God. The understanding harbours either truth or error, but it's the will that fills 'em. Good people receive *the love of the truth that they may be sav'd.* God is pleas'd to *manifest the good savour of his knowledge by us, and we are a savour of God to those that perish,* as well as to those that are *saved: to the other we are a savour of death unto death, to the other of life unto life.* A wicked man *hates the light, and comes not to it, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.* And as these *like not to retain God in their knowledge, he gives them over to a reprobate mind.* What opposes holiness opposes truth, *the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the mind, and the pride of life. The love of money is the root of all evil, which whilst some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith.* Observe those gradual marks of apostacy. 2 Cor. ii. 16, 17. Joh. iii. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 10.

First, People begin with an indifference to the truth: they lose a sense of sin, and the powers of a world to come. It's all one to them whether there's any satisfaction to divine justice or no. They grow careless about their souls; and a Saviour who is no God will do as well for them, as he that is one. Then,

Secondly, This gives 'em a contempt of God's people; they despise their gifts, they hate their graces; praying, hearing, and every other action of

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worship is impertinent to 'em. The more spiritual a Christian appears to be, either in devotion or out of it, and the more ridiculous they account him.

Thirdly, This will go on to an indolence about church-communion, and at last to a total neglect of it: *Remember the words that were spoken before of the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, how that they told them there should come mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.* People shall make it more their concern to shelter those who break the peace of churches, than to fill up their places in maintaining it. They will rather be keepers of other vineyards than attend their own.

Jude 17, 18, 19.

Fourthly, This shall go into a profanation of the Lord's day; the time that they once thought sacred is devoted to journies, or polluted with recreations, *saying to God, Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.*

Fifthly, As these practices are a plain contempt of God, so he oftentimes returns the contempt upon them: *Because they receive not the love of the truth, he therefore gives 'em up to strong delusions, to believe a lye.* They that declaim against a certainty in matters of faith will soon come to certainty enough in matters of error. And thus does an awful judgment vindicate itself against those that have *no pleasure in the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness.* Now here consider,

(1.) Any opposition to the truth, which appears in a hatred of practical godliness, carries its own confutation along with it. God leaves their arguments to be answer'd by their lives; and tho' people do not attend to the case till it grows notorious, yet the rule that Christ has given us is sure of being observ'd at last: *Beware of false prophets*

phets, who come to you in sheeps cloathing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know 'em by their fruits, men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. A vile person will utter error against the Lord; and it will be seen sooner or later, that they who cause divisions and offences, *serve not the Lord Jesus Christ but their own belly.* SERM. LVII. Isa. xxxii. 6. Rom. xvi. 17.

(2.) How unhappy is the soul that's seduc'd by these means? The case is describ'd in language plain and dreadful: *When they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure thro' the lusts of the flesh, thro' much wantonness those that were clean escap'd from them that live in error; whilst they promise 'em liberty they themselves are the servants of corruption; for if after they have escaped the pollution of the world, thro' the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning; for it had been better for 'em not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it to turn from the holy commandment deliver'd to 'em.* 2 Pet. ii. 18, 19, 20, 21.

(3.) Let me warn you against any opinion or conversation, that would teach you to trifle with the Lord's day. Whenever any wicked wretches are brought to religion, the *conviction* usually begins here; and there are very few go to the gallows, but own that the *corruption* begun here. I know that the admir'd name of Mr. *Chillingworth* is now plaid against the great article of our faith, the Divinity of the Son and Spirit, and the main evidence of our devotion, the religious observation of the Lord's day. If the letters pretended to be his are not genuine, then the memory of a writer who has perform'd so well for the Protestant cause is loaded with injustice and calumny; and if they are, we may say there is a more sure word of precept that we have to trust to. As he

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he that breaks one of the least of the commandments, and teaches men so, is not fit for the kingdom of God; you had need try whether the thing be so or no.

'Twas in a careful regard to the Lord's day, that your ancestors pass'd thro' the world with so much pleasure in their own souls, and such a noble testimony to the conviction of others. The book of sports was the great abomination under which they groan'd; and rather than promote it they fled into *New England*, choosing to lose their country, and keep their conscience. But the generous notions of liberty and free thinking that some advance make such a book either needless or irresistible. If the court should ever be so vile, here are people that will *love to have it so, and what will they do in the end thereof?*

(4.) 'Tis a mean and low carriage, if people are prest with an argument, to protect themselves against it with contempt, instead of an honest answer. Thus when our Lord had shewn that *the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light, the Pharisees who were covetous heard all these things, and derided him.* The cause of God needs no such baseness, but eternally abhors it.

Luke xvi. 14.

'Tis low and vile for people, when they meet with those that cannot dispute, to *bring in their heresies privily and unawares*, and when they are call'd into the battel, to turn off with a sneer. They are serious in their opinions to an inferior, and are always in jest about 'em before an equal. Thus, as one man mocks another, do they mock the great God. When seducers have to do with the unskilful, they push their cause; but upon other occasions they can lurch it, and shew the world that they are in jest when we are in earnest. How different was the temper and carriage of the Apostle,

who

who *thought it meet as long as he was in this tabernacle to ſtir 'em up, by putting them in remembrance?* SERM. LVII.

(5.) The laugh will quickly be turn'd upon 'em; for *ſurely he ſcorns the ſcorners.* The doctrine of Chriſt's Divinity, which is now to them a trifle, will be a ſolemnity, when they have no company to divert the thought, and no riot to drown it. You may have partners enough when you *deny* his perfection, but you muſt be alone when you come to *feel* it. *Of what puniſhment ſhall they be thought worthy who have trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and done deſpite to the Spirit of grace? It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* Theſe free-thinkers are no friends for a death-bed, but leave a poor ſoul to tug and toil with that which they have taught him to defy. Like a blown deer, when he is mark'd by the huntſman, he is neglected and driven out by the reſt of the herd; he has ſported with *them*, but they will not run with *him.*

2 Pet. i. 13. Prov. iii. 34. Heb. x. 29.

(6.) Let us be faithful to a glorious cauſe, that gives us an abhorrence of theſe methods; act worthy of the truth, *without partiality, and without hypocriſie. Follow righteouſneſs, faith, charity, and peace with them that call upon the Lord out of a pure heart.* The day is at hand that will *declare every man's work, of what ſort it is, for it ſhall be revealed by fire.* Thoſe notions bid the faireſt for being right that have yielded the moſt comfort upon a death-bed. Enquire then how they have believ'd who were *more than conquerors* in the laſt and great battel, and went off *rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, whoſe faith follow, conſidering the end of their converſation.*

2 Tim. ii. 22. 1 Cor. iii. 13. Heb. xiii. 7.

SERMON

Aug. 28, 1720.

SERMON LVIII.

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HAVING thus consider'd the last account that's given us of our *great God and Saviour*, that he was *receiv'd into glory*; and answer'd *the perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, who are destitute of the truth*; I now pass on to the

III. General head, which is, to consider this branch of our religion as I have done all the rest, under the notion of *a mystery*, and what is without controversie a *great* one. What we mean by this you have heard already,

First, That it is a thing which has been kept secret, and to this character the whole doctrine of Christianity agrees. It was scarce known at all to the *Gentiles*, and with a mixture of confusion and darkness among the *Jews*. Hence it is call'd *a*

Col. i. 26, 27. *mystery which has been hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest to the Saints, to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery.* Thus the same Apostle tells us, that

Eph. iii. 3, 4, 5. ver. 9. *God by revelation made known to him the mystery*; and he speaks of *his knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it is now reveal'd unto the holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit.* And the design of the Gospel is *to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world*

world has been hid in God. And again, we read of *the revelation of the myſtery which has been kept ſecret ſince the world began, but now is manifeſt, and, by the commandment of the everlaſting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.* SERM. LVIII. Rom. xvi. 25, 26.

Secondly, It muſt be of ſuch a nature, as to extend itſelf beyond the comprehenſion of our reaſons: *O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! how unſearchable are his judgments, and his ways paſt finding out?* So we read of *the love of Chriſt that paſſes knowledge.* Rom. xi. 31. Eph. iii. 19.

Many people contend for this as the only notion of a myſtery, that it is a ſecret, and therefore when it comes to be known, the title ought to be dropt. And indeed according to their way of reaſoning, my text is guilty of an impropriety in language. It ſhould by no means have been deliver'd in this form, that the myſtery of godlineſs *is* great, but that it *was* ſo; and the Apoſtle refer'd to no more than the vail that was thrown upon it; not the ſubſtance of what we do know, but the circumſtance of our *not knowing* it makes it be call'd a myſtery. And thus it may have its name, and be ſpoke of with all this wonder, not for the ſake of what it contains, but merely becauſe of thoſe *times of ignorance* that held ſo long upon the whole world.

But, in vain do men depart from the words of truth and ſoberneſs. The holy Ghoſt tells us what the doctrine of godlineſs *is*, not what it *was*; how juſtly it is admir'd by all thoſe to whom God has reveal'd it; and does not call it a myſtery from the ſtupidity of ſuch as never heard the joyful ſound. It is, ſaith he, a great myſtery ὁμολογουμένως we tranſlate it *without controverſie*; but it ſignifies the joint profeſſion that the people of God have ever made. They agree to be united witneſſes upon this head. Whatever others may think

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Tit. i. 1. not only *the faith of God's elect*, but *an acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness*. So that we have the voices of Christians in all ages and places sounding it forth, with the same confession, *Great is the mystery of godliness*.

Thirdly, By a mystery, as the word is applied to religious matters, we understand something that
Rom. xvi. 26. is *revealed*, and which we are sure the great God has told us. 'Tis not for us to give out a company of *cunningly devised fables*, and pass them off for mysteries; no, that's a profane imposture, equally striking at the omniscience of God, and the liberties of men. How incomprehensible soever any doctrine may be, yet, that the holy Spirit has declar'd it, is a matter that ought to be clear and open. 'Tis no reason that you should believe any thing from us, because we have strong imaginati-
Ezek. xiii. 3. ons that it is true. There are *foolish prophets who follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing*.

The more wonderful any doctrine is, the greater evidence should we have of its being reveal'd. And this is the way that God has taken with respect to the christian religion. As there is something in the nature of it that exceeds all our imagination, we ought to be very sure that it comes from heaven. To this purpose did God train up the *Jews* in an unaccountable devotion, because it was to be the emblem and figure of an unac-
Col. ii. 17. countable Gospel. It was *a shadow of good things to come, but the body was Christ*. They were to do things they knew not, *why*, in regard to what should be brought about they knew not *how*. The ark, and the mercy seat about it, was a token of the divine presence among 'em. When *David* brought these

these to mount *Sion*, he cries out, *Arise, O Lord, into thy rest, thou and the ark of thy strength.*

And to what purpose did he appoint among 'em such a little symbol of a great and glorious privilege, but in view of this, that *the word should be made flesh*, and take up his tabernacle among us? Why had they all their sacrifices, divers washings, and carnal ordinances, but with regard to an atonement that should be made for sin, and the great sanctification that we have from the holy Spirit? The *Jews* knew by their religion that something mysterious was to come after it; and when Christ appear'd, whose name was *wonderful*, they could then see, that all the devotions they had been employ'd in were to fix the hope of their Fathers upon Him. Joh. i. 14.

So that God had abundantly testified to the truth of our religion both in the former and later dispensation. The language of them both was, that he would make known to the world things that could never have been invented, and which, now they are reveal'd, can never be explain'd. Such a mystery is this part of our religion, that Christ was receiv'd into glory. There's a great deal in it that leads us beyond our depth: we are lost in the delicious wonder; but then at the same time 'tis matter of plain revelation. I shall here

1. Lay before you some few of the mysteries that we find in this branch of the christian religion.

2. Answer the objection that is made against it on the account of its being a *mystery*.

1. There are many wonders that a serious mind can observe in Christ's being receiv'd to glory. Such as these, It is strange that he who was so helpless and desolate should quickly after be possess'd of all the fulness of heaven. 'Tis farther wonderful, that he who seem'd abandon'd by God,

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the object of his wrath and justice, should be taken into so much favour: that he who was deserted by men and Angels is now the head of influence and government to them both; and that a suffering nature which was made to die should be united to one which is eternal and unchangeable.

(1.) We may behold and wonder, that Christ who was so helpless and destitute should be possess'd of all the fulness above. There is no similitude between his condition in the two worlds: *He was* Rev. i. 18. *dead, but he is alive for evermore, and has the keys of* Luke ix. *hell and death.* Here below, *the Son of man had* 58. *not where to lay his head,* and now he is *made high-* Heb. vii. *er than the heavens.* He bore upon him all the 26. marks of an unhappy yielding nature; he suffer'd it to be poor and miserable; but out *of his fulness* Eph. iv. *we are to be made rich*; for *he ascended up far above* 10. *all heavens, that he might fill all things.*

Could any one imagine that the characters of Heb. iii. the same person should be so extreme, *Ye kill'd the* 15. *prince of life*? that one under the notion and fate of a malefactor, should be a prince; and not only so, but that his empire should be life, the gift of his power, the grant of his authority and love? Joh. x. *I give to 'em,* saith he, *eternal life, and they shall* 21. *never perish.* How strange is it to read of their 1 Cor. ii. *crucifying the Lord of glory?* that he, whom they 9. hal'd along with contempt and cruelty, should have the whole disposal of the future world? *In* Heb. v. 7, *the days of his flesh he offer'd up prayers and supplica-* 8, 9. *tions, with strong crying and tears; learning obedience by the things that he suffer'd,* but now *being made perfect from his sufferings, he is the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him.*

How amaz'd was *Pilate* when he put the que- Joh. xviii. stion, *Art thou a king then? q. d.* Does captivity 27. answer such a name as that? This he enquir'd upon

on our Lord's telling him, *My kingdom is not of this world; if it was, then would my servants fight, but now is my kingdom not from hence.* It was strange language out of the mouth of a person deserted by his friends, and pursued by his enemies to the very gates of death; and yet it is all true, for he was a king: *He whom man despis'd, and the nation abhorr'd, the servant of rulers was* assur'd that *kings should see and arise, princes also should worship.* SERM. LVIII. Isa. xlix. 7.

They that met him when he rode to *Jerusalem* cried, *Hosannah, blessed is the king of Israel, that comes in the name of the Lord*; as it was foretold, *Fear not, daughter of Sion, behold thy king comes sitting on an ass's colt.* Tho' he hung upon the cross, and heard 'em say, *Himself he cannot save*, yet he was then within a few moments of an empire and dominion that should set him *above every name that is named, both in this world and that which is to come.* As *Daniel* was told in his vision, that *one like to the Son of man came in the clouds of heaven to the ancient of days, and there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroy'd.* Joh. xii. 13, 15. Eph. i. 20. Dan. vii. 13, 14.

Indeed these extremes may well be accounted for, because he submitted to the infelicities of this life on purpose to *put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*; and when that was done, the necessity of humiliation being all over, *he for ever sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.* But who could ever imagine that the same person, who calls himself *a worm*, should have before him a greatness that would shew him to be a God?

His disciples themselves knew not how to conceive of this. They attended him with love and wonder quite thro' his ministry, *they follow'd him*

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in the regeneration; but when he came to die, they ſcarce thought it conſiſtent with the glory of his own perſon, or the redemption of *Iſrael*, that was expected from him. Had they thought that going after him to the croſs was putting themſelves into the train of a king, they would not have forſaken him and fled. But tho' he was then *departing out of the world to the Father*, returning back to him that ſent him, throwing off mortality and all its incumbrance, yet that was more than they imagin'd. As Chriſt tells *Peter*, *Whither I go, thou canſt not follow me now, but thou ſhalt follow me afterwards.* They could neither look beyond the croſs nor above it. That unhappy lot was the fartheſt bound of their meditations, and ſo *they ſcatter'd every man to his own, and left him alone.* God had then hid from 'em what would be their joy and conviction another day; tho' *he was crucified in weakneſs, he muſt be rais'd in power.*

Joh. xiii. 36.

2 Cor. xiii. 4.

A little diſtance of time brought 'em to reconcile theſe things in their thoughts which they imagin'd would never come together in nature. They ſpeak of them in the ſame breath, *The God of our fathers has glorified his Son Jeſus, whom ye took and hang'd on a tree. That ſame Jeſus whom ye crucified has God made both Lord and Chriſt. Ye denied him in the preſence of Pilate, when he was determin'd to let him go; and we are his witneſſes, and ſo is the holy Ghoſt whom God has given to all that obey him.*

Acts v. 30, 31. ii. 36. iii. 13.

Is not here a myſtery, that He in whom our nature was at the loweſt, the greateſt inſtance of abaſement that ever liv'd in the world, that in him the ſame nature ſhould have all its perfections! that tho' his body was the moſt abus'd, and his ſoul under the heavieſt preſſure of grief and wrath, yet each of theſe ſhould be *full of joy with the light*

light of God's countenance! that a soul plung'd into *hell* should *not be left* there, and a body under the empire of corruption should *see no corruption:* that under this hell, and in view of this corruption, God *shew'd him the path of life:* that in going to die he was but going to live: that he enter'd into hell, into all the anguish that his soul could feel, not to stay there: that he made the grave his road to heaven: that the path of death was to him the path of life; and what he call'd an absence from God was the means of a presence with him. These are mysteries that swarm and croud in upon us; they are too wonderful, and so high, that we cannot attain unto 'em: *Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only does wondrous things, and blessed be his glorious name for ever, and let the whole earth be fill'd with his glory.* Psal. lxxii. 18, 19.

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(2.) It is more mysterious, if we consider this glory as an act of God's favour to a person who was lately under his wrath. The enemies of our Lord's Divinity do not love to have us talk of these matters; and the reason is plain, because as bearing the indignation of the Lord is more than a mere creature could do, and therefore supposes him to be *God's fellow*, so the troubles he underwent not being on his own account, it leads us to consider the imputation of his righteousness to us, and of our sins to him.

And therefore one author who pretends to answer Mr. *Trosse*'s catechism is very peremptory, that the Father was never angry with the Son, for which he gives this reason, he was always well pleas'd with him. 'Tis pity that a man, who cannot distinguish himself in so plain a case, should presume that no other person is got above that stupidity. The Father was always well pleas'd with him as a Son, and a righteous servant; but does not the Scripture very often represent him as the

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object of a divine juſtice? Can any words be fuller to this purpoſe than that *God laid on him the iniquity of us all*; that *he made him to be ſin for us who knew no ſin*; that *it pleas'd the Father to bruiſe him, and put him to grief, and to make his ſoul an offering for ſin*; *that he ſpar'd not his own Son, but gave him up for us all*; that *him he has ſet forth to be a propitiation for our ſins thro' faith in his blood.*

Iſa. liii. 10. 2 Cor. v. ult. Rom. viii. 32. iii. 25.

When he pray'd to be deliver'd from the cup that was put into his hand, and acquieſc'd at laſt in the divine diſpoſal, thoſe words, *Not my will, but thine be done*, ſhew what the will of the Lord was, that *by this will we ſhould be ſanctified thro' the offering of the body of Jeſus once for all.* Hence we read that *to redeem us from the curſe of the law, he himſelf became a curſe for us*; *as it is written, Curſed is every one that is hanged on a tree.* In the place from whence we have this paſſage, it is ſaid, *He that is hanged is accurſed of God.*

Heb. x. 10. Gal. iii. 10. Deu. xxvii. 26.

Thus has the holy Ghoſt repreſented him to us as bearing the wrath of the Almighty, and ſuffering our whole puniſhment. No wonder that his enemies look'd upon him as *one ſtricken, ſmitten of God, and afflicted.* *David* as his prophet and his type ſpeaks of this caſe, that the wicked would ſay, *Let us perſecute and take him, for God has forſaken him; he truſted in God that he would deliver him*; *let him deliver him, ſeeing he delighted in him*; or as our Evangeliſt tells the ſtory, *ſeeing he ſaid I am the Son of God.* But God was ſo far from owning him, that himſelf complains, as the Pſalmiſt had done ſeveral ages before, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* and as it is there added, *Why art thou ſo far from the words of my roarings?*

Pſal. xxii. 4.

And yet this perſon ſo forlorn, and accurſed, was the favourite of heaven. What he endur'd was a puniſhment with reſpect to us, and a merit

in

in himself; and therefore what he receiv'd was properly a reward. His miseries may be consider'd two ways; as to what is past, they are for the doing away of sin, the finishing transgression, the putting an end to iniquity: as to what is future, they are a recommendation of him to the divine favour. SERM. LVIII.

Here's the wonder: he cries to the Father for help, *If it be possible, save me from this hour.* The Father denies him this petition, and yet it is without any resentment on either side: *As the Father knows me, so I know the Father, I lay down my life for the sheep.* He has no uneasiness at the resolution that was past for his dying; nor has the Father any contempt of him on account of the death he submitted to. Tho' he wou'd not excuse him from drinking the cup that was put into his hand, yet he will give him a name above every name. He is not only receiv'd into a place of reward, but with the greatest love from the Father whom it once *pleas'd to bruise him and put him to grief.*

He that took delight in the sufferings of Christ, to whom his blood was a *sweet smelling savour*, rejoyces in him as *a righteous servant*, and as the Son of his love, *in whom he will be glorified. Therefore does the Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again.* Here then is the mind that has wisdom; mystery and pleasure flow into us. No joy in Christ upon a throne hinder'd him from being a sacrifice upon the cross; no punishment upon the cross could hinder him from being welcome back again to the throne: *Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God has highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name.* Joh. x. 17. Phil. ii. 8, 9.

(3.) You see that he who was deserted by men and Angels is now the head of influence and go-

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vernment to 'em both. He had little attendance in the former part of his life; Angels *came and miniſtred to him* in the wilderneſs, and the diſciples continu'd with him in his temptations. He could have call'd in more than twelve legions of Angels to have prevented his death. He had one of 'em to ſtrengthen him under his agony in the garden; but we do not read that there were any of 'em in his laſt battel with the prince of this world. The diſciples fled for fear, the Angels were held back by order, that he might *tread the winepreſs alone*. They had no indifference to him, and no dread of the confederacy that was form'd againſt him, but at that time he muſt be unaſſiſted.

Now, this deſolate perſon was afterwards to have his crowds; tho' he was hung between heaven and earth, as one that had no intereſt in either, yet he ſoon declar'd himſelf to be the ſovereign and the delight of both. When he died, nature itſelf groan'd under a thick darkneſs. The ſun was hid, the ſky cover'd, the rocks rent, the graves open'd, the earth ſhook, the temple unfolded, the vail of it torn at the fall of Him who was *greater than the temple*.

But when this was over he both gave and receiv'd a joy, both above and below: he carried a *glory to God in the higheſt*. We may ſuppoſe the Angels looking down, and hanging their heads over the croſs whilſt he ſuffer'd there. They might rejoyce indeed in the great deſign of procuring peace on earth, and ſhewing ſo much good-will towards men; but as far as we can judge of *their* nature by the ſoftneſs of *our own*, when he bow'd down his head and ſaid it is finiſh'd, they gave a ſhrink at the laſt breath of one whom they lov'd ſo well, and attended ſo long. And if we may imagine any ſuch concern upon 'em, it was ſoon over, they were ready to receive a Lord that was lately

lately sorrowful to death in the garden, and driven out by the pains of death upon the cross. SERM. LVIII.

They would also guard his body in the sepulchre. They that had *disputed with the devil about the body of Moses* would never suffer any insult upon that of Jesus. And may we not say, *Who is this that comes from Edom, with his died garments from Bozrah, so glorious in his apparel? Wherefore is he so red in his apparel? Because he has trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him.* Isa. lxiii. 1, 2, 3. But behold him in his return, *The Lord goes up with a shout, our God with the sound of a trumpet.* Psal. xlvii. 5.

He went to heaven *to fill all things.* Angels are the better for him. *He reconciles them in heaven,* not by bringing 'em from a state of enmity, but he confirms them in a state of friendship, and therefore calls himself *the Lord God of the holy Angels.* He maintains the great pomp of that world. Heaven it self is only what he makes it. Filling all things supposes in him such a perfection, that nothing greater can be said of any being, and it expresses *the fulness of him who fills all in all.* Nay, from thence he fills his church upon earth with light and grace. *He receives gifts for men,* he conveys these gifts to them, and whilst he thus makes them grow, *they increase with the increase of God.*

(4.) 'Tis another mystery that a suffering nature is united with that which is eternal and unchangeable. The Scripture ofttimes speaks of those actions under the characters of one nature, that must be attributed to another. Thus when we read of a *God* purchasing a church with *his own blood,* the meaning is this, that he who is God took upon him a bleeding nature by which he was capable of making this purchase.

Now here's a wonder that in our blessed Saviour we see a part that was liable to shame, torment and

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and death, and yet at the same time we are to conceive of him as one eternally above all those things: not only God, but unchangeably so, blessed, and that for ever, without any interruption to his felicity. His days on the earth were a shadow, and yet he is without beginning of days and end of years. He was *toss'd to and fro as a locust, his strength became as a potsherd*, and yet he is the same person to day and for ever. He never wanted a glory, and yet he is received into it. The Divine Nature is without any variableness or shadow of turning; to talk of giving *that* a happiness or of taking any away from it is blasphemy; and yet he had a joy set before him, which he was not then arrived to, and after he had endured the cross and despis'd the shame, *he sat down at the right hand of God.*

These are no contradictions, you will understand them of different natures; but it is very mysterious that God should be with us; that he whose dwelling is not with flesh should take part of the same that we have; and that he, who has said *to whom will you compare me and make me equal*, should in all things be made *like unto his brethren.* That he who as a Creator is our Father, as a Redeemer should be the first-born among many brethren. Well may his name be called *wonderful*, when a child born is the mighty God, and a Son given the everlasting Father.

2. I promis'd to consider what men in the vanity of their minds have urg'd against this doctrine merely because it is a mystery. So that what the people of God in all ages have confess'd with pleasure they would have us asham'd of. There are two absurdities that are often used by way of insult.

First, A flat denial that there are any mysteries in religion. This indeed makes clear work with all

all revelation at once, and is in effect a limiting of the holy One of *Israel*, a prescribing to God what he shall tell us, and making our wisdom a standard to his. 'Tis calling his counsels to our bar, and pronouncing sentence upon what he saith, whether it is true or false, though we mean no more by it than intelligible or unintelligible. SERM. LVIII.

Secondly, There's another craft by which some people think to carry their cause, and that is putting us upon an explication of what we have called a mystery; which is only a trick to make us destroy what we are building up. Thus does a certain author pretend to put off every argument that's brought for the Trinity, by teizing questions, "Why will they not tell us, saith he, whether by "three persons they mean three infinite minds or "not," which is a word of undetermined signification. If he that puts the question will tell us whether he means by three minds three Gods, he knows, and so do all mankind, it would be answer'd in the negative; and yet he can allow himself to rush thro' all evidence, and go on without either truth or shame, to assert that we are setting up the tritheistical doctrine, *i. e.* that we maintain three Gods. I shall be never the more persuaded that these people give us the true meaning of God's words, who are resolved at all hazards to pervert what they know to be the sense of *ours*. But,

1.) Denying that there are things unintelligible in Christianity, and reducing our faith to what we can explain, is giving countenance to an humour in religion that we should be ashamed of every where else. What would a mathematician or any artist think of me, when he has surprized me with a certain fact, if I should say it's impossible, because to me it is inconceivable? That the thing is done I see, but how it is brought about I do not know, and so it is here. I may be sure that God has told

SERM. LVIII. told me such things, tho' I cannot by searching find 'em out.

2.) That other way of putting us upon explications of a doctrine which we say is a mystery, is an argument that these men *know nothing*, but love to *dote about questions and strife of words*. How ridiculous would this be in any other case? As for example, suppose the question is, whether *Lazarus* was rais'd from the dead or no? We affirm it, only upon the report of a history which we know to be true; that it is there laid down in words easy to be understood. Now there can be no answer to this, but to shew us either that we have mistaken the narrative, or ought not to trust it. But how vain would it be for any one, instead of replying this way, to flirt upon us with such questions as these authors use concerning the Trinity, and argue in this manner, will they not tell us what became of *Lazarus*'s soul? Was it in heaven? If so, it must be a looser in coming back again. Or was it in hell? That opinion is as bad. Or was it in a separate state? That leads us into an antichristian folly. Or was it not parted from his body? Then he could not be dead: Now, what's all this to the purpose, when the question is not *how* it came about, but whether the thing is true in fact? Cannot I believe that *Lazarus* died and rose again, without pretending to account for what was never written? And just so it is in the other case.

1 Tim. vi. 3.

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I HAVE now only one thing more for your service from this great subject, and that is,

IV. To consider the Deity of Christ who was thus manifest in the flesh, and *received up into glory*, as it is a doctrine of godliness, and designed to promote a religion that is pure and undefil'd before God and our Father. We must *obey from the heart that form of sound doctrine into which we are deliver'd.* We are the servants of righteousness. We are *chosen to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth, and purify our souls in obeying the truth through the spirit.*

Rom. vi. 17, 18.

2 Thess. ii. 13.

1 Pet. i. 22.

I have shewn you under the several heads of Christianity that are collected in this text, that the truth contained in it is of a practical nature. By the belief of these things men have lived in duty, and died in peace. I shall therefore in these arguments give my thoughts a new turn, and shew you how it is a mystery of godliness under the distribution that the Apostle gives us. The three graces he mentions are all employ'd, enlarg'd, confirm'd and refresh'd by our receiving this testimony, that he who is spoke of in these words is truly GOD.

These are, as we read in that well-known place, *faith, hope and charity.* They are not oppos'd to one another as some vain men for their own ends do

SERM. LIX. do presume to insinuate. There's no charity but what grows out of faith, and there's no faith but what grows into charity. We read of *faith in the Lord Jesus and love to all the saints*, and that *your faith grows exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth.* There's no more contradiction between these two than between the root and the branches. God has join'd them together, and it must be a sad confounding work for men to put them asunder.

Col. i. 4. 2 Thes. i. 3.

I take these three in their more extended notion to include the whole work of the Spirit upon our souls, and the exercise of them to comprehend our whole duty to God in the world. Whatever he does in us may be reduc'd to some of these heads, and whatever we do for him is only bringing forth into life what he has given us in principle.

Now you will find that there either can be no existence of faith, hope and charity, or no use of 'em, and no benefit by them, but what has either regard to, or a deduction from the Deity of him who was manifest in the flesh. *Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; and he that loves him that begat, loves him also that is begotten of him; and whatever is born of God overcomes the world: who is he that overcomes the world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God?* If he is not God, 'tis in vain that our faith regards his person, that our hope depends upon his promise, and our charity rejoices in his people. Every one of these graces does not only suppose that we have a revelation concerning Christ, but that this revelation tells us of his Divinity. As you will see by distributing your thoughts under the particular heads that I have now mentioned.

1 Joh. v. 6. —4, 5.

1. I begin as the Apostle himself does with your faith: This he makes to be the first of the three. And tho' some in a little spurt of wit tell us, that they

they know no other Trinity but faith, hope and charity; yet if their faith was right, they would know another Trinity, that is, they would receive what God has proclaimed concerning himself in the holy Scripture. But in the way that many of them go on, they are in great danger of knowing another trinity, *The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.* SERM. LIX.

I shall here take *faith* in such a view, as to keep it distinguish'd from hope; for we often confound them in our descriptions. What is said of one does equally belong to another. But under the head of faith, I would desire you to take these three particulars; our assent to the revelation that God has given us, our profession of this to the world, and our duty and devotion to him in whom we believe. These things belong to faith, as it is different from the hope that is in us. Now you will find upon a just examination, that without a regard to the Deity of Christ, we may be at a loss in every one of the particulars that I have mentioned. If we do not own him to be God, we neither assent to the revelation, nor can we make an honest confession of him to the world, nor is it possible we should be clear in the acts of worship and duty.

1. One thing contain'd in that faith that is the principle of every good man, and that leads him into all his practice, is, that he can rest himself upon *the record that God has given of his Son.* He reads and subscribes *to the witness of God,* the testimony that we have in Scripture. And the work of faith upon this head is to silence all the mutterings of carnal reason, and bring down every high thought to captivity and obedience.

Our minds are as unsanctified as our wills: We may as well pretend to a natural holiness as a natural wisdom. The Spirit of God is to *enlighten* Eph. i. 18;

the

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the eyes of our underſtanding, as well as make us feel the power of his grace in our hearts, and the ſweetneſs of it in our affections. And till he has produc'd upon us a glorious change, as our corruptions riſe againſt the commands of God, ſo does our ignorance againſt his doctrines: The one we reckon bondage, the other fooliſhneſs. *The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs to him, neither can he know them becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* 'Tis a dreadful account that we have of the *carnal mind, that it is enmity againſt God, and is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* Now divine grace teaches us our duty. It ſhews us that ſuch a work muſt be done, tho' it be againſt all the temper of human nature, and ſuch a truth muſt be received though it be againſt all its dictates. *We receive not the ſpirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God.*

1 Cor. ii. 14.

Rom. viii. 7.

Believing a myſtery is a branch of ſelf-denial, as well as complying with a precept. We have as much to ſay againſt taking up our croſs that he has preſcrib'd, as againſt any doctrine that he has reveal'd. The account he gave of himſelf was this; *As the living Father has ſent me, and I live by the Father, ſo he that eateth me even he ſhall live by me; this is the bread that came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead, he that eats of this bread ſhall live for ever. Many therefore of his diſciples when they heard this, ſaid, this is a hard ſaying, who can bear it? When Jeſus knew that his diſciples murmur'd at it, he ſaid to them, does this offend you? But there are ſome of you that believe not, therefore ſaid I unto you, no man can come unto me, except it were given him of my Father.*

Joh. vi. 57, 58. 60, 61. 64, 65.

'Tis no more unnatural for me to ſay, that one is three and three are one, than to hate father and

mother and life it ſelf for the ſake of the Goſpel. There's nothing more ſhocking in any myſtery than there is in ſuch a command. But faith rubs through the difficulty, by ſaying, this is the word of a God that cannot lie, and therefore it is true; this is the will of a God who gives no account of his matters, and therefore it muſt be done. Reaſon has as full an obligation in one caſe as it has in the other. How can he who appeared in the fleſh be God? How is it poſſible there ſhould be but one ſupreme eternal being, and yet the ſame things be ſaid with equal fulneſs of the Father, Son, and holy Ghoſt.

Certainly, ſay they, "this can never be the "meaning of the revelation; our religion muſt "be reducible to common ſenſe; God will never "tell us contradictions; and what have we our "reaſons for, but to judge whether the propoſi-"tion is true or no?

You will ſee that this argument is owing to a want of faith, or an acquieſcence in a doctrine purely upon a divine teſtimony; that if we really did believe what God ſaith, merely becauſe he has ſaid it, theſe objections would be all diſarm'd: and that you will ſoon perceive, if you do but turn the force of this reaſoning upon the practice of ſelf-denial.

Has not a martyr, or one who for the ſake of Chriſt ſuffers the loſs of all things, as much to ſay againſt the troubles of life, as we can oppoſe to the myſteries of faith? may he not plead juſt as the others do?

"Has the God of nature oblig'd me to ſave "my life, and am I taught by Chriſtianity to "think that it may be my duty to loſe it? what? "is our religion a heap of contradictions? Has "Chriſt ever ſpoke of that with reputation in his "Goſpel, which is a breach of the ſixth com-

SERM. LIX. " mandment in the law? Does grace root out the " very firſt principle of nature, which is ſelf-pre- " ſervation?" that three cannot be one is no more a maxim, than ſelf-preſervation is a principle with human nature; and I can as ſoon *believe* what God tells me contrary to the former, as I can *do* what he bids me when it is deſtructive of the later.

Now, as faith ſaith I muſt do the duty that God calls me to without asking *why*; ſo it equally ſaith, I muſt believe every doctrine that he has reveal'd, without asking *how* can theſe things be? The reaſon of this abſolute ſurrender of the underſtanding and the will is plain; becauſe, as I know God is infinitely good, he will do nothing wrong, and therefore his ways are gracious tho' I may not ſee 'em; ſo God that is infinitely wiſe, will ſay nothing falſe, tho' at preſent I cannot explain it: *What if ſome did not believe, ſhall their unbelief make the faith of God of no effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, and every man a liar, as it is written, that thou mighteſt be juſtified in thy ſayings. Every mouth muſt be ſtop'd, and the world become guilty before God.*

Rom. iii. 3, 4. ver. 19.

Heb. xi. 8. Rom. iv. 18. *Abraham* in his obedience went out *not knowing whither he went*, and in his faith *believ'd in hope and againſt hope*. This is faith, to believe every thing that God ſaith upon his own word, as well as to do every thing that he orders for his own ſake. Any other ground of our aſſent to a doctrine than a divine teſtimony, is not faith, but ſomething elſe; and therefore to argue, I know not how to reconcile the Divinity of the Son and Spirit to the unity of God (ſuppoſing theſe things to be clearly laid down in Scripture) is the rebellion of unbelief; 'tis the principle that *exalts itſelf againſt the knowledge of God*, 'tis the foam of a carnal mind.

2. Without

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2. Without thinking that he is God who was manifeſt in the fleſh, we cannot make a fair and undiſguis'd profeſſion to the world. The Scripture has laid a great deal of weight upon this: *If thou believe in thy heart, and confeſs with thy mouth, thou ſhalt be ſaved; for with the heart man believes unto righteouſneſs.* Our intereſt in the righteouſneſs that God has provided, our application to it and dependence on it is all with the heart; but with the mouth confeſſion is made to ſalvation. Our ſalvation is concern'd in what we *ſay*, as well as in what we *think*. 'Tis not enough that your hearts are fill'd with an eſteem of Chriſt, and employ'd in a reliance upon him, but there muſt be a confeſſion with the mouth. Rom. x. 10.

God has call'd the tongue *your* glory; and he has given it on purpoſe that it may be engag'd for *his*. It was foretold that this would be the effect of Goſpel doctrine and Goſpel grace, that *one ſhould ſay I am the Lord's, and another ſhould call himſelf by the name of Jacob, and a third ſhould ſubſcribe with his hand to the Lord God of Iſrael:* that is, they would take all the ways that could be to publiſh the name of the Lord, to make known his mighty acts among the ſons of men, to ſpeak of the glory of his kingdom, and triumph in all his praiſe. As carnal reaſon would perſuade us not to glorify the chriſtian doctrine, ſo carnal intereſt has as much to ſay againſt our confeſſing it. Our Lord knew all this, and therefore warns us againſt *denying him before men.* The Apoſtle, tho' he was very careful of *Timothy*'s health, yet tells him, he muſt *not be aſhamed* either *of the teſtimony of Chriſt*, or of one that was *his priſoner, but be a partaker of the afflictions of the Goſpel by the power of God.* Iſ. xliv. 5.

Now, he that believes that Jeſus is God has not only the ground of a good confeſſion, but the method of a clear and diſtinct one; he both knows

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why and *what* to say. The Scripture has fill'd his mouth with arguments, that the child born is the everlasting Father, and the Son given the mighty God: that he who was made of *the seed of David* is over all *God blessed for ever*. In this doctrine he makes a stand; 'tis above the reach of his thoughts indeed, but it is what God has told him. And he can never think the Scripture would have worded these things with so little caution, that by it we should be taught to *speak* of the Son as we do of the Father, as if they were of one nature, and yet *conceive* of 'em as if they were of two.

Thus a Christian is at a point. This, as our Lord tells *Peter*, is the *rock upon which he would build his church, and the gates of hell have not* yet prevailed against it. Those gates have open'd all ways, and pour'd out their forces with a prodigious variety; sometimes denying the unity of God, and sometimes the trinity of persons; and yet the church stands, and so does the truth just where Christ has left it. We may call this as he
1 Pet. ii. 6. does, *a tried foundation, and a sure corner stone;* it has been tried seventeen hundred years. If the batteries of impiety could have brought it down, or the underminings of craft could have blown it up, we should have lost it long ago. But we are making that *good confession* now, which the Apostles and Prophets have witnessed before us.

There's nothing new *in the malice of the adversary;* they only revive exploded arguments, and rotten heresies, that have no more of antiquity than the stench of it: and there is nothing new *in our cause,* we contend for no more than the faith once deliver'd to the Saints; 'tis as old as our religion, it was reveal'd when that began, and will be glorious when that's complete.

You will see the difficulty of making any profession, when people go off from the Deity of

Christ; *their ways are moveable, none can know 'em,* as it is said of the adulteresses, and may well be applied to those who *go a whoring from their God: Now they are without, now in the street, and now in every corner*; and when they are baffled in an argument, can *wipe their mouths, and say we have done no evil.* SERM. LIX.

Sometimes they deny that Christ had any being before his incarnation, and any existence before his human nature. This was the error of *Samosatenus*, which *Socinus* reviv'd with a few alterations and amendments. That is now the abhorrence of our polite age; they own that he is above the Angels, and that he was before 'em: and because they resolve not to call their opinion by the name of *Arianism*, they rather choose to have it nonsense; *they* will not say he is a creature, nor allow *us* to say that he is a God; he is not produc'd by creation but emanation: He had a beginning, and yet there never was a time when he was not; that is, he both had a beginning and no beginning. So hard do men always find it to poise their own schemes, tho' they think it easie enough to see the faults of others.

What is it that these are witnessing a confession to who deny the Deity of Christ? what do they say of him? they answer indeed, that he cannot be God, equal to the Father and the Spirit, without making three Gods; and therefore he must be distinct from the Father in nature, or otherwise you cannot secure the Unity of the Godhead. Well, what is he then? a God he cannot be in the supreme sense of the word, a creature he must not be. Does he derive from the Father? they tell us, yes. Was he ever underiv'd? they tell us no; because the Scripture sets no time for that derivation. If we ask 'em, Is he self-existent? they deny it. Is he necessarily existent? they will not own it; for, as a learned person observes, self-

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exiſtence is a word with two faces, one to oblige friends, and the other to keep off enemies.

We are oblig'd by Chriſtianity to make ſome profeſſion of our Lord, *not to be aſhamed of him and his words*, and what can we ſay when we throw up his Deity? we are like a tree that is looſe at the root, that can ſtand no longer than till it's tried. A *Jew* asks if he was any more than a man? we ſay yes. An *Atheiſt* asks if he is a God? we ſay no. He replies, why is he call'd ſo? we tell him, he has only the name in a ſubordinate ſenſe. He takes the ſame way to expound what is ſaid of the Father, that we do upon thoſe places that refer to the Son, and by our own handle of argument he tells us flatly that the Scripture declares no ſupreme God at all.

No wonder that perſons who go off from this doctrine are againſt any profeſſion, when their ſcheme leaves 'em ſo unable to make one: *A double-minded man is unſtable in all his ways.* They may give our practice, as long as they pleaſe, the hard names of inquiſition, popery, and bondage, but the infelicity ariſes from within. Asking for their faith is only rummaging into their confuſion. Tho' they ſeem to be ſo very clear in the point *what Chriſt is not*, yet they are all in the briers when you ask 'em *what he is*. So that, their profeſſion is a ſort of *negative Chriſtianity*; it goes no farther than to tell us what he is not; and all this while, tho' it is evident what they witneſs *againſt*, yet no mortal can tell what it is they witneſs *to*.

Is it to his being a creature? no, they ſay that's blaſphemy. Is it to his being neither God nor creature? all mankind will ſay, that's nonſenſe. If they ſay they cannot tell what his exiſtence is, that it's between a creation and a ſupremacy, that a being may be from another, and yet not made by

by him, this is a myſtery. Thus they are driven to that as a refuge, which they object to us as a crime. They'll not allow us to ſay that Chriſt is both God and man, that there's an union between the two natures, which we cannot explain but yet believe; and now they are forc'd to take the ſame way in maintenance of their own ſcheme. A trinity in unity is no more a contradiction than a ſubordinate God, or a deriv'd eternal. I can as ſoon believe an union between the divine and human natures, as a medium between a ſupreme and a created nature; and if I muſt not pretend to account for the later, I may be excus'd in adoring the former. SERM. LIX.

3. I told you that there muſt and will be, where there is a true faith in Chriſt, a life of duty and devotion to *him:* I ſay, TO HIM, not only *by* him as he is Mediator, but *to* him, as he is the object of theſe applications. We *call on the name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, as well as on the Father, thro' the Son and by the Spirit; and how ſhall we call on his name, and ſo be ſav'd, if he is not God? *How ſhall they call on him in whom they have not believ'd?*

Believing in any one is the great homage of our ſouls to him; 'tis doing our all for him, 'tis truſting our ſouls with him; and can this faith and hope be in any leſs than a God? 'tis making him the centre and the end of all our duties: *To that end Chriſt both died, and roſe again, and reviv'd, that he might be the Lord both of dead and living. No man of us lives to himſelf, and none dies to himſelf:* no, but *if we live we live unto the Lord, and if we die we die in the Lord; ſo that living or dying we are the Lord's.* He means neither leſs nor more in this profeſſion than what he ſaith in another place, *To me to live is Chriſt.* They live to him that died for 'em and roſe again. Rom. xiv. 7, 8, 9.

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If a perſon is doing all this to a creature, or to one who by nature is no God, what has he left for him who is the ſupreme and governing cauſe? Is there an infinite diſtance between the Father and Son in themſelves, and is there to be none in our devotion? There's a curſe upon him who makes fleſh his arm, and whoſe heart *departs from the Lord*; and does Chriſtianity lead us into ſuch a departure? has the Goſpel enſnar'd us? is that which is life in itſelf made death to us? God forbid.

Thus you ſee how looſe we ſhall be in our devotions, how tremulous and wavering in all our practice, when once we let go our hold of his Deity who was manifeſt in the fleſh. We ſhall either not worſhip him at all, as ſome of theſe writers tell us we ſhould not; or we muſt do it with confuſion, if we liſten to thoſe that ſay we ſhould. And what a ſad way muſt a man be in, about a practice that conſcience tells him is needful, and criticiſm tells him is dangerous? In worſhiping the Son, he is afraid of provoking the Lord to jealouſie; in not doing it, he may fear the vengeance of his wrath when it begins to burn.

And it is commanded that all men honour the Son *as* they honour the Father. Some tell him that the word AS does *not ſignifie* an equality; but that makes him no eaſier in his mind, and no more ſettled in his proceedings, unleſs they can tell him what it *does ſignifie*. It certainly includes ſomething, and people do him no good who do not poſitively determine *how much* there's in it. For if he muſt not honour the Son equally with the Father, he may be either a rebel by giving too little, or an idolater by giving too much. And can that be a doctrine of godlineſs, that does not only confound people in their thoughts, but unhinge 'em in their practice?

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They that tell you that Christ is God and man, leave your way clear with respect to duty. As man you're not to worship him at all, but consider him as a creature, as a dependent, as an example, as a sacrifice; but as God you're to love him with all your heart and soul and mind and strength, to call upon him, to believe in him, to live by him, to derive all the existence and growth of your religion from him. There's no difficulty in conceiving the nature and method of your practice: but the man that will not determine what Christ *is*, is never like to determine what you must *do*.

2. You may observe the same of your hope, that it regards the Divinity of Christ. This is another of those graces that the holy Spirit works in us; and in doing that he testifies of him. 1st, We rest our souls upon his righteousness. 2dly, We are satisfy'd in the truth of his promises. 3dly, We look to him for an everlasting life. These things are sometimes call'd our hope, and sometimes our faith; faith supposes 'em to be *invisible*, and hope to be *future*.

(1.) We rest upon his righteousness; and that we could never do, if he was not the supreme God. I have no more concern in the death of *Jesus*, than in that of *Moses*, if no more can be said of him than that he was made of a woman and made under the law. But when he is said to bring in *an everlasting righteousness*, that takes into it a great deal more than the extremity of his sufferings: it was *by himself that he purg'd away our sins*, and therefore this is the name whereby he shall be call'd, *Jehovah our righteousness*. Jer. xxiii. 6.

I own that some who deny his Divinity, say they trust in his death; but I should think those of the party talk with the greatest unity of sentiments, who strike at both; as it is well known the

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the champions of their scheme have usually done. They tell us, and that in a manner which is profane enough, that God might have accepted of what he pleas'd as the payment of our debt. This is bold unhallow'd language, to say no worse of it. I should never dare to say that God *might* Heb. ii. 10. *have done* the reverse of what it *became him to do.* The Θεοπρέπεια that the Apostle speaks of ought to stop the mouths of gainsayers. We are not call'd to determine the necessity of his nature, especially since he has told us the resolution of his will; that *it became Him for whom are all things, and by whom are all, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect thro' his sufferings.*

It was more decent for him to pardon sinners upon a full price; and this no creature was able to pay. He that was originally under the law, as a servant, could not be made under it as a sacrifice; and therefore he that became responsible for our debt must have none of his own. He that put himself under the law, on purpose to make a merit of his doing so, must have been eternally above it; and that can be true of none but God.

(2.) We trust him for our protection. He has 2 Cor. i. 2. given us promises, *In him they are yea, and in him* Jude 1. *Amen. We are preserv'd in Christ Jesus, and call'd.* Now, certainly we can be kept by no less than 1 Pet. i. 5. *the power of God thro' faith to salvation.* This is the ground of our adoration, *To him that is able to keep us from falling*; that is to the Lord Jesus, whose mercy we look for to eternal life; to him who can present us faultless before his glory with exceed- Jude 24, 25. ing joy, *to the only wise God our Saviour be dominion and praise for ever.* See the proportion there is between what we expect from him, and what we ascribe to him; between the blessing he gives to us, and the name that we give to him. We

look upon him as one that keeps us; as *Paul* saith, *The Lord will preserve me from every evil work, and bring me to his heavenly kingdom.* Nay, it's he that fills the place we are going to; we are presented *before his own glory.* And he that does these things can be no other than the only wise God our Saviour, and must have no less than glory and dominion for ever. SERM. LIX. 2 Tim. iv. 18.

(3.) We give up our souls to him in a dying hour. As that is the last, so it must be the greatest act of our faith and hope: and in this it will be hard to suppose, that the Christian who has all along been *yielding himself to the Lord* should die believing in a creature. That 'tis to Christ this surrender must be made, I have often shewn you: *Lord Jesus receive my spirit,* saith the martyr *Stephen: We look to Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith,* saith another: *I come quickly, and my reward is with me,* saith Christ himself: *Amen, even so come Lord Jesus,* saith the Spirit in the name of every believer, with which he closes the whole book of God. The Bible begins with laying before us the creation of a God, the heavens and the earth; and it would be a flat ending to represent him who saves that earth, and fills those heavens as a deriv'd agent. But as Christ comes to do more than ever the creation was, so we shall be able to say, *This our God is the God of salvation;* and it will be said to *Sion, Thy* GOD *reigneth.* Rom. vi. 13.

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Sept. 25, 1720.

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'THERE's no room for the question, whether charity is not another of those graces that supplies our religion as a principle, and gives a glory to our practice before all the world. The Apostle has told us plainly, that tho' *there abide these three, faith, hope, and charity*, yet *the greatest of these is charity*; that, without it, *tho' we had all faith and could remove mountains, tho' we had all knowledge and could understand mysteries*, they would each of 'em *profit us nothing. Speaking with the tongue of men and Angels*, without charity, would make us only like *a sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal*; all noise, and no harmony. Nevertheless, let me here observe to you a few particulars upon the notion that the holy Scripture has given us of christian charity.

1 Cor. xiii. 13. ver. 1, 2, 3.

(1.) It is sometimes us'd for the meek and humble temper of mind that we ought to have towards the whole world. We are bid to *honour all men*, and be ready to *do good to all as we have opportunity*; *giving no offence to any, either Jew or Gentile, or the church of God*; being *blameless and harmless in the midst of a corrupt and perverse generation, among whom we are as lights in the world.* This is indeed a needful and a noble part of the conversation that becomes the Gospel of Christ; but it does not express the meaning of that charity that is greater than faith and hope. (2.) The

1 Pet. ii. 17. 1 Cor. x. 32. Phil. ii. 15.

(2.) The word is often made to signifie the forbearance of injuries to those from whom we have receiv'd 'em. That, tho' we see in our enemies no disposition to repentance, yet we must not say, *I will recompense the man as he has done to me, but wait upon the Lord, and he shall save us.* This does indeed demonstrate religion to be the ruling principle; for *Saul* made it a maxim that obtains among them who know not the grace of God, *If a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away?* But as our blessed Lord gives us a greater example than *David* did, so he has made it a perpetual branch of the royal law, *not to render evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing*; for even Christ, *when he was revil'd, revil'd not again, and when he suffer'd threatned not, but committed himself to him that judges righteously. And so is the will of God, that with well doing we may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. Servants must be subject to their masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward; for this is thank worthy, if a man for conscience towards God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.*

Rom. xii. 17. Prov. xx. 22. 1 Sam. xxiv. 19. 1 Pet. iii. 9. 1 Pet. ii. 15. ver. 18, 19.

This also, tho' it is a necessary character in the people of God, cannot be the charity which is so much admir'd by the Apostle, and is of all this importance to every believer: for, he is not here describing a temper to enemies, but that which ought to breathe thro' all our behaviour to the Saints: *As we are the body of Christ, and members in particular*, the charity we are to follow after is that which *may edifie the church.*

1 Cor. xii. 27. xiv. 1, 4.

(3.) Charity does sometimes denote a readiness to forgive and receive into favour those who have abus'd us. This is different from what I mention'd under the former head; for there I design'd no more than a not returning upon 'em their own iniquities, laying aside revenge; but it is a great deal

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deal more than this, when we will use 'em as friends, and be reconcil'd to 'em, and so pass over the transgression as if it had never been, making those who have done us harm the men of our counsel and confidence. As *Achish* treated *David*, saying, *He has made his people Israel utterly to abhor him, therefore he shall be my servant for ever*; and afterwards, *I will make thee keeper of my head.* This is what may be our duty, and, if we have tasted that the Lord is gracious, will be our pleasure. We are bid to *love those that hate us, bless them that curse us, and pray for them that despitefully use us, that we may be the children of our heavenly Father.* Now, these phrases are certainly to be taken two ways; we are by no means to confound 'em, but must distinguish upon the carriage of those who have done us injuries.

1 Sam. xxvii. 12. xxviii. 2. Mat. v. 44, 45.

First, Some of these that have hated and cursed us continue to do so. Now here, blessing and loving them can mean no more than negatives, not cursing 'em and not hating them, doing them no harm; or, if it calls us to any more, we do it to reclaim them, according to that rule: *If it be possible, as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, revenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head: be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* Whilst they manifest no signs of repentance, I am indeed to remember that vengeance belongs to God, and must not avenge myself with my own hand; but it is impossible under the violence of that wicked temper, that I should take any pleasure in such people. Nor does religion oblige me to do a thing so gross and foolish, as to put myself into their hands, in whom I see no disposition to peace. We should rather wish for *wings like a dove, that we*

Rom. xii. 18, 19, 20, 21.

Psal. lv. 6, 7, 8.

may

may flee away, and be at reſt, wander far off, and remain in the wilderneſs. If an enemy reproaches me, I muſt hide myſelf from him, *God himſelf ſhall hear and afflict 'em, even he that abides of old.* But then, SERM. LX. ver. 12. ver. 19.

Secondly, Several of thoſe who have curs'd and hated us are aſham'd of it; they confeſs their faults, and deſire to be reſtor'd into that favour which either their imprudence or our impatience has made 'em loſe. Now here, *loving* theſe, and doing 'em good, takes into it a great deal more. We are to act to them as God does to us. He may *ſpare* without repentance, but he never *pardons* without it. There may be *forbearance* and long-ſuffering, but there's no *forgiveneſs*; and in this he is a patern to us.

Charity to thoſe who have been injurious and continue ſo, is doing 'em no harm; but the charity that we ſhould uſe to one who humbles himſelf, and is afflicted with a ſenſe of the wrong that he has done, is of a more benevolent temper: *Let the righteous ſmite me, and it ſhall be a kindneſs, let him reprove me, and it ſhall be an excellent oyl which ſhall not break my head.* Praying for the former ſort is only that God may convince 'em, *ſhew 'em their error that they have exceeded,* and grant 'em repentance. But when all this is done in 'em, praying for 'em is the fruit of brotherly love; a friendſhip thus reſtor'd is like a bone ſet anew after it has been broken. Some ſay it is ſtronger and firmer than it was. Whether that be ſo or no, I cannot tell, but thus it is in the caſe before us. Pſ. cxli. 5.

Two perſons whom the grace of God has reconcil'd, who have felt the bitterneſs of quarrelling, and who come to underſtand one another in a true light, are like to be more uſeful and endear'd than ever they have been; becauſe the friendſhip riſes from a mortification of luſt, from a ſenſe of God's love

SERM. LX. love to us, and ſome exerciſe of ours to him. 'Tis all godlineſs; and I can never think that Chriſtians either feel or ſhew a greater power of religion than in their obedience to that command, *Confeſs your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.*

Jam. v. 16.

Job and his friends had liv'd in a proſperous acquaintance for ſome years; high words paſs between 'em, when his affliction had brought 'em together; and perhaps a great deal of crime in the converſation on both ſides. He charges them with cruelty, they him with unbelief. *Elihu's wrath was kindled againſt Job, becauſe he had juſtified himſelf rather than God: and againſt his three friends was his wrath kindled, becauſe they had found no anſwer, and yet had condemned Job.* But obſerve how this ends: *God returns Job's captivity when he prays for his friends,* and he tells 'em, that it was his prayer that ſhould be accepted for 'em. What a happy cloſe was this of a debate that ſeem'd to be ſtrengthen'd on both ſides, and never like to expire! they come to ſee that the man whom they accus'd of denying providence, of ſpeaking atheiſtical language, and uttering rebellion againſt God, muſt be their advocate to the throne of grace; and he who complain'd of injuries by theſe people muſt not have a bleſſing upon himſelf till he has beg'd one for them.

Job xxxii. 2, 3.

xlii. 10.

This advantage can the grace of God teach us to make of the wiles of Satan. The friendſhip which piety reſtores is a thouſand times better than that which mere acquaintance begun. *Oneſimus* was a relation to *Philemon*, and alſo a ſervant; but very ungrateful to the former character, and very diſobedient to the later: he runs away from his kinſman and his maſter; but the grace of God follows and finds him when he was loſt: a principle of religion ſets all his thoughts in a toil to go back

back again. The Apostle who had been his spi- SERM. LX.
ritual Father must be also his temporal peace-maker. The person by whom he was brought to God is the same that restores him to *Philemon*; and a noble argument he has in his pacific design: *Perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldst receive him for ever, not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, especially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord?* What the issue of this proposal was, we are not told; but I think the Apostle has given us ground for our confidence in what he saith of his own: *Having confidence in thy obedience, I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.* Philemon 15, 16. ver. 21.

(4.) Charity is often us'd to signifie no more than liberality or external beneficence, upon which I would desire you to take one observation, that tho' this is a needful part of charity, it is far from being the greatest thing in it. That it is necessary we are plainly told: *If any man have this world's goods, and sees his brother have want, and shuts up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwells the love of God in that man?* there must be outward kindness to demonstrate inward compassions: *If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say to 'em, be thou cloath'd and be thou warm'd, and give 'em not those things that are needful to the body, what shall it profit?* it profits neither you nor them: *As you have opportunity, do good to all men, especially to the household of faith. 'Tis a faithful saying*, and what we are to *affirm constantly, that they who believe in God be careful to maintain good works, which are good and profitable to men. Rich men* are not to be allur'd, desir'd and importun'd, but *charg'd to do good, to be ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store a good* 1 Joh. iii. 17. Jam. ii. 15, 16. Gal. vi. 10. Tit. iii. 8. 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18, 19.

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good foundation for the time to come, laying hold on eternal life.

Thus you see these external favours are necessary; but yet they are far from being the main thing in our charity; as you will soon find, if you do but consider, that the poor who are *rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom*, would be deficient in the best of all graces, if there was no charity but in giving. And on the other hand, the Apostle has laid down a text, which ought to strike an awe quite thro' our souls: *Tho' I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profits me nothing.*

1 Cor. xiii. 3.

What a tremendous proposition is here! that a man shall bestow all his goods on the poor, and yet not have charity! he may do this, as superstitious people have often done, without any love to God; he is only frighted into it by the darkness of an unsanctified conscience. This shews that the grace we speak of lies within, and takes its name not from what's in the *hands*, but from what's in the *heart*. *Paul* was as charitable as *David* or *Solomon*, not in what he gave, but in what he felt.

(5.) Charity in this place signifies that temper of mind that we should have to the people of God, consider'd in their religious character. 'Tis more than a meekness to all the world, and a patience under injury: In the former we regard people as men, in the latter we strive to conquer them as enemies; but here we look upon 'em as *holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling*, as those *who have obtain'd like precious faith with us thro' the righteousness of God our Saviour.*

Heb. iii. 1. 2 Pet. i. 1.

If a person is no Christian, or no friend, we are to do him no harm; but he is not within the reach of that charity which the Apostle is writing of, for he lays it upon the ground of our Lord's own

rule: *By this ſhall all men know that ye are my diſciples, if ye have love one to another.* Certainly by this love to one another, he means a great deal more than the love of courteſie to mankind in general, or the love of pity to enemies. Theſe would never ſhew 'em to be his diſciples; that is, not *loving the brotherhood, loving as brethren. Love one another, and this is love that we walk after his commandments; and this is the commandment, that as ye have heard from the beginning, ye ſhould walk in it.* SERM. LX. Joh. xiii. 35. 1 Pet. ii. 17. iii. 8. 2 Joh. 5, 6.

Such a charity as this is what the holy Ghoſt produces in us; nor can we have it any other way than by an Almighty creation. 'Tis not the peculiar of certain ſchemes, or the prerogative of ſome opinions, but a perſonal grace. I may think as another does about the doctrines of the Goſpel, and yet want his charity. If he has this grace, he is as much born to that as to any other principle. As his faith is of the operation of God, as he is fill'd with hope by the power of the holy Ghoſt; ſo *the fruit of* the ſame *Spirit is love, joy, peace, gentleneſs, meekneſs, and patience.* It's only as *the elect of God, holy and beloved, that we put on bowels of mercy, humbleneſs of mind, meekneſs, long-ſuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; and above all, putting on charity, which is the bond of perfectneſs.* Gal. v. 22. Col. iii. 12.

'Tis the vanity of ſome ſchemes to make men talk of charity; but God leaves 'em deficient in that, on purpoſe to let all the world ſee that none but he can give it. 'Tis not engroſs'd by a party, as we cannot but own by obſerving, that where it is moſt talk'd of, it is leaſt practis'd; like the people who were always bawling out, *The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are theſe,* who ſeem'd in their diſpoſition to be fartheſt from the temple; for they *ſwore, and kill'd, and committed adultery, and ſerv'd Baal, and burn'd incenſe* Jer. vii. 4, 9, 10.

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to other gods, and came into that holy place saying, we are deliver'd to do all these abominations. The Scripture has recommended no other charity than that which *suffers long and is kind, envies not, vaunts not itself, is not puffed up, does not behave itself unseemly, seeks not her own, is not easily provok'd, thinks no evil, rejoyces not in iniquity, but rejoyces in the truth.*

1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5, 6.

(6.) This grace, like all the rest, is imperfect in us now; and therefore that we may abound in it, we should use the means that are appointed. There must be a caution over our own hearts, *looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, and a root of bitterness spring up. Putting off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, which are bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour and evil speaking*; these are to be *put away with all malice*; *be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us.* Believe that the opposite to this is a lust of the flesh, and that Satan will do all he can to hinder us in it. He will allow us to make our boast of charity, or any other grace, provided we do not live in the practice.

Heb. xiii. 15. Eph. iv. 22. ver. 31, 32.

(7.) Charity is never to be separated from other graces, much less oppos'd to 'em. A man who says you are for faith, and I for charity, is as ridiculous as if he should say, you're for feeding, and I am for breathing. They are both necessary not only to us, but to one another. He will make but poor work with his criticism who advances the lungs above the stomach, so as to employ all his care about the former, and none about the later. We read of *purifying our hearts by obeying the truth unto an unfeigned love of the brethren*, and are order'd to *love one another with a pure heart fervently*: where you may observe these four things,

1 Pet. i. 22.

First, That all brotherly love begins in conversion, with *purifying the soul.* An unregenerate person may

may have a good temper, a civil deportment, and from lower consideratiōns take delight in the company of God's people; but he has no more charity than he has faith or hope: *Love is of God; every one that loves is born of God, and knows God.* SERM. LX. 1 Joh. iv. 7.

Secondly, The Spirit is the author of this grace. Tho' it is spoke of as your act, *you have purified your souls*, yet it is *thro' the Spirit*. As it is said in another place, *Ye are taught of God to love one another*. There's as great a work needful upon your souls to love one whom ye have seen, as one whom you have not seen: *We know that we have pass'd from death to life because we love the brethren*. No other than the Almighty arm, that gives us a look into heaven, can dispose our minds to a right esteem of the Saints: He that makes 'em *the excellent of the earth*, must make 'em *all your delight*.

Thirdly, It was by *obeying the truth* (which supposes hearing and believing it) that their souls were thus purified to *an unfeigned love of the brethren*. They were not left in error or in darkness; charity comes as faith does by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. A man that does not know the truth cannot obey it; and a man who does not obey it can have none of this brotherly love. He may have what *he* calls charity, and what *he* calls faith; but they are false, and will be thrown out at the first payment. It signifies nothing what we give religious names to, God knows his own work, and will approve of no other. He has made a love of the brethren to be the effect of obedience to the truth; and if we make it any thing else, it is no plant that our heavenly Father has planted, but shall be rooted up and thrown into the fire.

Fourthly, He exhorts 'em upon the ground of what the holy Spirit had already given 'em, that as in obedience to the truth their souls were purified to an unfeigned love of the brethren, they

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ought *to love one another with a pure heart fervently.* This is but acting up to their nature; I do not mean their firſt but their ſecond nature, which they are made partakers of thro' the influence of thoſe exceeding great and precious promiſes that are given to 'em.

(8.) As the reſult of all theſe obſervations, I would farther tell you, that a belief of this myſtery in my text, *his Deity* who was manifeſt in the fleſh, and *receiv'd up into glory*, is a belief of *the truth* by which the holy Spirit has purified the ſouls of men to an unfeigned love of the brethren. This is a doctrine of charity as well as all other godlineſs, as I think will appear from theſe following particulars. It gives us the greateſt tenderneſs for thoſe that are in error, 'tis a foundation of eſteem for thoſe that love the truth, and it lays before us the beſt arguments for a brotherly kindneſs.

1. Our belief of any myſtery, but eſpecially of this, is the ground of forbearance and meekneſs to them who are yet in error; and the reaſon is plain, becauſe as a myſtery is what none but God can reveal, and what none but God can impreſs, ſo it employs my pity, and not my anger, to them who will not own it.

People who advance the ſchemes which they call *rational*, are impatient with any who have more or leſs light than themſelves. What a ſtrait path has a certain author cut out for his charity; expoſing, cenſuring and condemning thoſe who ſay that the Son of God was *not deriv'd*, and doing the ſame by a back-ſtroke againſt them who ſay *there was any moment of the derivation?* He thinks it is very clear from nature, that there can be but one perſon who is the ſupreme God, and yet it is clear from Scripture that more than one perſon is ſpoke of under that title. He is ſenſible the *Socinians* were quite wrong in making Chriſt no more than a man; the

the *Arians* were as bad in making him a creature, and the christian church in so many ages and places are most of all condemn'd for saying he is *the same with the Father in substance, equal in power and glory.*

So that it's very hard, when a man has got a scheme of his own, to keep him in temper with any one else; because he does not pretend this doctrine is reveal'd to him; 'tis the glory of *his* opinion, that it is void of mystery, and therefore every one who does not come into it must be slothful or ignorant, an *Enthusiast* or a *Tritheist*, of an unpolite and confus'd head. That these are the effects of man's wisdom when it pretends to measure God's, is notorious from the sad experience of our day. It has brought among us *debates, envyings, wraths,* 2 Cor. xii. *strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults.* 20. Hence we have had *evil surmisings, and perverse* 1 Tim. vi. *disputings of men who suppose that gain is godli-* 4, 5. *ness.*

This seems to be the natural consequence of such proceedings. For if I say, as these authors do in their title pages, that "here's a scheme of the "Trinity not only agreeable to Scripture, but no "ways repugnant to the old philosophy, or to "human reason;" A man that does not come into it represents me as mistaking the Scripture, and saying what is contrary to reason; and therefore in this dissent the charge of folly is insinuated on both sides. He thinks there's no reason in my opinion, and I must think there's as little in his opposition. We are charg'd *to beware, lest any man* Col. ii. 8. *spoil us thro' philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.* Let us not heed those who *intrude into things that they have not seen, vainly puff'd up* ver. 18, *in their fleshly mind, and not holding the head.* 19.

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But they who say that great is the mystery of godliness leave no room for persecution; for the very title we give our doctrine intimates that flesh and blood cannot make it known. And 'tis an absurdity of the darkest as well as the vilest nature, to punish men for not believing what's above 'em, as much as not seeing what's behind 'em. The Apostle directs us to leave people in the hands of Christ: *If any man be otherwise minded, God will reveal even this to him.* 'Tis an argument for *the meekness* that should be us'd in *the instruction of those who oppose themselves, that peradventure God will give 'em repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth.* They never can acknowledge the truth without repentance, and they never can have that till God gives it.

2 Tim. ii. 25.

Indeed a good man looks upon an error in this point to be of a dangerous nature, because Christ himself has said, *If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.* But tho' this is a powerful argument for us to endeavour *the turning of a sinner from the error of his way*, yet the transcendency of these things to human reason ought to banish all external force and violence from our ways of promoting 'em. A mystery is never convey'd into the mind by a punishment upon the body; and he that allows a man no other choice than a church or a jayl, to be a proselyte or a prisoner, has given a mortal wound to the very cause he contends for.

I would also farther observe to you, that it is no persecution, nor the least degree of it, to exclude persons from what they are not fit for. You do no injury in keeping those from the table who are not of the family. There's a happy *medium* between forcing 'em to enter in, and plaguing 'em for staying out. Neither of these are lawful, but it's no harm to keep those out that should not

not be in. 'Twas the glory of an *Asian* church, that she *tried and could not bear those who said they were Apostles and were not, and had found 'em liars.* SERM. LX. Rev. ii. 2.

If a man does not believe the great truths of the christian religion, he's neither fit for my communion nor for my abhorrence. We are to *receive one another as God has receiv'd us all;* but where there are no *marks* of God's receiving, there can be no *rule* for ours. He that denies the mysteries of religion may be pitied, and ought not to be punish'd for his error; but there's no more harm in keeping him out of the church, than there is in denying the bread of a child to the clamour of a stranger.

2. The noblest foundation for charity is a mutual acknowledgment of the truth that is after godliness: *Our hearts are comforted, being knit together in love to the acknowledging of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.* We *follow righteousness, faith, charity, and peace, with them that call on the Lord Jesus out of a pure heart.* Do but enquire into a late scheme of peace, and what a strange mixture is comprehended in it. Some have their standing there who are for the truth, because they choose to conceal it: *They stand on the other side when strangers carry us away captive, and foreigners enter into our gates. They should not have look'd on in the day of their brethren, nor have rejoyc'd in the day of our destruction, nor spoken proudly in the day of our distress.* Col. ii. 2. 2 Tim. ii. 22. Obad. 11, 12.

Others make up the number who oppose themselves to the doctrine of the Gospel, and these are of different sorts. Some run into the *Sabellian scheme*, as they do who cannot give the title of supreme God to the Son, because they say it belongs only to the three persons consider'd together. Others are tinctur'd with unsublimated *Arianism*: they

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they tell us the Son is co-eternal with the Father, and yet *deriv'd* from him; that he is of an inferior nature; and that the Spirit is not call'd God at all, nor has any title to our worship.

Some will give adoration to Jesus Christ, and others will not; and tho' it is but a few years since the opposition to our Lord's Divinity was manag'd by the *Socinians* yet now they are spoke and writ against with contempt. *Socinus* himself saith the *Arians* are not Christians; and they are out of his debt by declaring they would not admit a *Socinian* to baptism.

Besides, an union upon concealment of principle is nonsense. What sort of a charity is that which makes us agree with people we know not why, and run after 'em we know not where, and own 'em as brethren for we know not what? But when persons *hold the head*, and are visibly concern'd for the common salvation and the glory of Jesus Christ, *both their Lord and ours*, it throws a vail over our lower divisions. *Aristarchus* was *Paul's fellow prisoner*, *Marcus* sister's son to *Barnabas*, and *Jesus* call'd *Justus were of the circumcision; and yet these only were his fellow workers to the kingdom of God, and were a comfort to him.* We are neither in temper nor at leisure to attend the disputes that have been stretch'd out with violence. We can then conceal the faith that we ought to have *to ourselves* on purpose to maintain that which ought to *be spoke of throughout the world.*

Col. iv. 10, 11.

3. This doctrine gives us the best argument for charity, because God has reveal'd himself to others upon these articles that have been of importance to us. They have obtain'd the like precious faith with us: *Grace and peace are multiplied thro' the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.* And it gives us ground to hope we shall meet in a better world, and sing over that doctrine in eternal prai-

ses

ſes which now fills us with a ſilent wonder. The temple of God was open'd in heaven, and there was *ſeen in his temple the ark of his teſtament.* This is the great provocation to love and good works, that we ſee the day approaching, the day of knowledge and glory, when *the ſun ſhall no more be our light by day, nor the moon by night, but the Lord himſelf will be an everlaſting glory.* As for a *faith* we know not, we are not like to *follow* it, nor can we have any thoughts about the *end of their converſation*, whoſe works are in the dark. When men ſee not the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, whether it's the God of this world who has blinded their eyes we cannot tell, but the knowledge of the truth is our preparative for heaven, and we look upon thoſe that have it as our fellow-travellers thither. And it ſtrikes a life thro' all our converſation to think we are going to a place where thoſe doctrines will be no more denied, but *the myſtery of heaven be open'd* to ſwell and delight our ſouls for ever.

SERMON

Octob. 9, 1723.

SERMON LXI.

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I SHALL now dismiss this glorious text that gives us the main branches of our religion, or, as it is here call'd, *the mystery of godliness*; a doctrine that's reveal'd from heaven, and promotes a divine purity upon earth, that employs our faith and animates our practice. All that I need to do at parting with such a subject, is only to look back upon the road over which we have gone. The distribution of what I have to say at the close of this great work you may take under the following heads.

1. I would give some friendly advice to those who are not convinc'd either of the truth or importance of this doctrine, which I have laid before you in such an abundant way.

2. I shall make some little application to such whose hearts God has touch'd with the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. And,

3. I would give you a short account of myself with relation to this *glorious Gospel of the ever blessed God, which has been committed to my trust.*

(1.) We may suppose after all that has been said, that there are yet gainsayers amongst us, to whom the word of the Lord is a reproach, and who are
2 Cor. iv. 3. *weary of hearing it. Our Gospel is hid from 'em. The Spirit speaks expressly that in the later times some*

shall

shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, speaking lyes in hypocrisie, and having their conscience sear'd with a hot iron. 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. But as they are still within the joyful sound, as it is not too late to call after 'em, so I would, from a hearty concern for their welfare, leave these few admonitions with 'em. SERM. LXI.

1. Tho' you can't believe this doctrine, don't indulge yourselves to a profane contempt of it: *Be ye not mockers, lest your hands be made strong. Surely he scorns the scorners.* Isa. xxviii. 22. Prov. iii. 34. A very little wit will serve to ridicule the mysteries of the Gospel, and make you agreeable to those that *walk after their own ungodly lusts.* But what do these sports of infidelity end in? they may tend to harden conscience in others, but they will wofully soften it in yourselves.

This is the way to a double darkness upon a sick bed, and to make death a thousand times more the king of terrors than he is in himself: *What will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation that shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help, and where will ye leave your glory?* Isa. x. 3. What do you get by tossing out a jest upon the great salvation, but only to be stung with despair, when you come to find that there is no hope for you, and no spirit in you?

People may have their doubts about any doctrine of religion. The best of God's children have complain'd of *a wicked heart of unbelief*; but there is a wide difference between those principles of opposition to the truth which are our burden, and those that a corrupt nature will esteem to be our glory. I remember a passage in the works of Mr. *Isaac Ambrose*, to this purpose, that one told him he had attended a long time upon Mr. *Richard Vines*, an eminent preacher in this city, who had manag'd the controversie between us and the *Jews*

SERM. LXI. with great learning and piety. And when he had gone thro' his arguments, he addreſs'd himſelf to the people in ſuch words as theſe: "Now, ſaith "he, perhaps many of you will think that I have "fully confuted the *Jews*, and given 'em ſuch "an evidence of our religion, as they will not be "able to anſwer; and indeed I do take the rea- "ſons to be above the oppoſition of gainſayers; "but yet I would embrace the feet of that man "who could aſſure me, that I ſhould never again "queſtion in my own ſoul, whether Jeſus was the "Meſſiah or no. Upon which, ſaith the hiſto- "rian, a general groan went thro' the congregati- "on, as if every perſon ſhar'd in the concern that "a miniſter ſo eminent ſhould complain of an un- "belief that would hazard the foundation of our "moſt holy faith.

Indeed there's no truth in all religion that Satan will not tempt us to blaſpheme, and to which our own corrupt hearts will not ſupply the ſeeds of infidelity: *The tranſgreſſion of the wicked ſpeaks in our hearts, that there is no fear of God before his eyes.* *Luther* complains that his mind was fill'd with *horribilia de Deo, & terribilia de fide:* ſuch thoughts of God as were horrible, and ſuch of faith as were dreadful.

Pſ. xxxvi. 1.

But how vile and dangerous muſt the caſe of that ſinner be who does not mourn over this unbelief as his burden, and keep it all conceal'd within himſelf as that which is not fit to be ventur'd abroad; but rather *glories in his ſhame*, and throws out the filth of a heart that is deſperately wicked in raw and rude arguments of blaſphemy; like *raging waves of the ſea, foaming out their own ſhame?* Have a care of *increaſing to this ungodlineſs.* Don't make light of that which the holy Spirit has deliver'd with all the ſolemnity that words can have.

Jude 13:

And,

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And in particular, let me warn you againſt one ſleight of theſe men that *lie in wait to deceive*; and that is this; they endeavour to break your concern for a doctrine by telling you, "it is poſſible you "may disbelieve it, and not be damned; that ſure-"ly none will dare to ſay, that they who deny "this opinion are all veſſels of wrath fitted to de-"ſtruction." What low reaſoning is this! how mean in ſo great an argument as the Divinity of Chriſt! how trifling in ſo great an affair as the ſalvation of ſouls! We ſee that they who periſh'd in the wilderneſs *enter'd not in becauſe of unbelief.* Heb. iii. ult. *Let us therefore fear, leſt a promiſe being left us of entring into his reſt, any of you ſhould ſeem to come* iv. 1, 2, 3. *ſhort of it; for to us was the Goſpel preach'd as well as to them, but the word preach'd did not profit 'em, not being mix'd with faith in them that heard it. We who have believ'd do enter into reſt.*

'Tis nothing to me how many errors may be conſiſtent with a ſtate of pardon, I can have no hopes of being *ſaved* but by *the love of the truth.* God has join'd together *a ſanctification of the ſpirit, and a belief of the truth,* as the way of my ſalvation: and I have no authority to drop the one any more than the other. When I deſire a perſon to go in a ſafe road, and not to travel upon a precipice that may turn his head, and make him loſe his life, I act a friendly part: and if another perſuades him to run the hazard, becauſe it's poſſible he *may* eſcape, he that talks at this rate, if he's not an enemy, muſt be look'd upon as a trifler; for tho' others have gone ſecure thro' theſe dangers, yet what recompence is that to a man who by venturing is daſh'd in pieces? therefore do you *build up one another on your moſt holy faith,* and have compaſſion on thoſe that differ.

We are not call'd to determine the ſtate of *Mahometans, Jews,* or *Pagans,* who can ſcarce ſay they have

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have *heard the fame of Jesus with their ears.* Nor is it our business to say of any who are cut off without giving a testimony to the truth, what is become of 'em: *Secret things belong to God, judge nothing before the time.*

Deu. xxix. 29.

1 Cor. iv. 5.

But is my charity to make me an infidel? must I either pronounce sentence on one who has denied the Lord that bought him, or be indifferent to what the Scripture itself has call'd *damnable heresies?* Is there no medium between censuring another, and guarding myself? There are *strange delusions* that some are given up to, who have *no pleasure in the truth, but in unrighteousness.* Several people *believe a lye, that they all may be damned:* and these things are written not for us to point out the men, but to fence against the opinions. Whilst we *follow peace with all men,* we must *look diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God.*

2 Pet. ii. 1.

2 Thes. ii. 11, 12.

Heb. xii. 14, 15.

2. Let me farther beseech you not to run into the common extravagance of those who deny the Deity of Christ: *Shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as does a canker. In a great house there are vessels to dishonour.*

2 Tim. ii. 16, 17.

One would think it very possible for people to be in that error without going any farther; but as God has told us, so we find it, that *evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.*

iii. 13.

The only question is, and ever must be, whether this doctrine is reveal'd in Scripture or no. If it is not, there's no other evidence that we can possibly bring in as the ground of your faith; and therefore he that opposes it fairly, has nothing to do with its conformity to reason, and the maxims of philosophy. These we are warn'd against as so much *vain deceit: The rudiments of the world and the traditions of men* are *not after Christ. False*

Col. ii. 8.

1 Joh. iv. 5.

teachers

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teachers are of the world, and therefore speak they of the world. It may be a truth, and yet appear in none of that light: it is of a superior nature. If God has told us it some other way than by the understanding that his Spirit has given to all mankind, it's certain their cause is lost. For *we speak not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world which come to nought; but the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordain'd before the world unto our glory.* 1 Cor. ii. 6, 7.

If he has said it in his word, the man who thinks he reads it there is never to be convinc'd but by one of these ways; either that what he takes for a divine revelation is not so, or that he has mistaken the sense of the words. The controversy of our day runs fast into the former question; tho', as some of their writers own, the matter is not yet ripe. Now observe what danger people are entangled with by departing from the truth.

First, Some take refuge for this error in another that is more general, that there can be *no certainty in matters of faith.* This makes a Christian's hope to be no more than a silly dream, and his practice no better than a perpetual ramble. This is one reason why we *continue in the things that we have learn'd, and been assur'd of*, because *we know of whom we have learn'd 'em, and have known the holy Scriptures that are able to make us wise to salvation.* Believers have *an unction from the holy One, and know all things.* We must *continue in the faith grounded and settled, and not be mov'd away from the hope of the Gospel which we have heard; rooted, and built up in him, and establish'd in the faith as we have been taught.* When we talk to the *Jews*, we *fight uncertainly as those that beat the air*, if there's no certainty in matters of faith. And when the martyrs 2 Tim. iii. 14, 15. 1 Joh. ii. 20. Col. i. 23; ii. 7.

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tyrs *overcame by the word of their teſtimony*, as they liv'd they knew not how, ſo they dy'd they knew not why. Here's the ſeal of blood given to mere *Enthuſiaſm*; but they were ſupported with the hopes that the Spirit has witneſs'd with their ſpirits, that the cauſe for which they ſuffer'd was of God. Yet

Secondly, All this mighty and gracious work of the holy Ghoſt is profaned with contempt; ſo that, tho' he has done ſo much in giving us the Scriptures, and is promis'd to lead us into the way of all truth, yet we are told there is no ſuch thing as *the way of truth*, and therefore it's a jeſt to ſpeak of his leading us thither. Theſe are men *blaſpheming what they know not*. But *he that overcomes the world is he that believes that Jeſus is the Son of God; and the Spirit bears witneſs becauſe the Spirit is truth.*

Jude 10. 1 Joh. v. 5, 6.

Thirdly, This brings 'em either to deny the divine revelation, or to curtail it. Some are at work to tear out ſingle verſes, others run away with entire books, tho' plagues are threatned to the man who either *adds to theſe things, or takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy*. Some will make the works of Scripture not to be a declaration of the truth, but a cover of hereſie; *handling it deceitfully, and walking in craftineſs.*

Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

Fourthly, This runs into a contempt of God's people, who have not only profeſs'd the doctrine in words, but believ'd it in the whole courſe of their experience: their ſteddineſs is abhorr'd, their ſeriouſneſs is laught at. We cannot but ſee that divine grace has made a public difference between ſome and others, and therefore it's never ſafe to refuſe the precious, and chooſe the vile. The man who gives up himſelf to prayer, who reads the Scriptures, and with a devout importunity fetches light from above, *may be* in an error; but whatever

ever I may think of his notions, it would be wrong in me to disdain him, and admire those who take the name of God in vain. I ought to *purge my self* from these, *and follow charity with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. These are spots in our feasts of charity.* SERM. LXI. 2 Tim. ii. 21, 22. Jude 12.

Fifthly, Take heed that these things do not ruin practical religion. No new opinions concerning Christ can be your protection in the neglect of his worship. I fear it may be observ'd of some families, that as these doctrines have come in, prayer has gone out. Now, whatever light people get, yet if their zeal for holiness is lost, if the sabbath is defil'd, the name of Jesus treated with no reverence, and his worship attended with no fervour, your *hearts* are not right in the sight of God, and 'tis a dreadful sign that your *heads* are wrong too.

3. Another advice I would give you is this, Be open to conviction. Let truth be its own recommendation. Don't struggle against evidence; there's nothing got by stifling that but a reproach of conscience. No agreements or acquaintance are of so much value as the doctrines of the Gospel. What do you get by depriving Christ of his Deity, but a floating faith, a misgiving hope, and an undetermin'd practice? *Search the Scriptures daily, whether the things be so or no.* Acts xvii. 11.

What's the advantage of having a Saviour who is not God? what are your souls afraid of in supposing that he who paid your ransom was equal to him who receiv'd it? to say that this is a contradiction, is only to involve the wisdom of God in a slander; for if he has reveal'd it, it must be true and right; if he has not, why are his own people ensnar'd? How come men, that have always shewn a true regard about happiness, to mistake it

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in the dependence of their faith, in the direction of their prayer, and the comforts of a death-bed?

Is it likely that they who live as without God in the world, whatever other advantages they have, do know the deep things of God, the wisdom that lies in a mystery? and that the humble praying Christians, the generation that have sought his face, are suffer'd to live and die in an error? Whatever you may make of *politeness*, 'tis never to be set upon a level with *piety* in matters of pure revelation:

Psal. xxv. 9. Joh. vii. 17. Mat. xi. 25. *The meek will he guide in judgment, the meek will he teach his way. If any man do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God. He has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and reveal'd them unto babes.*

Your danger comes from those who care not whether there's any other world or no, *Men that rebel against the light, and abide not in the paths thereof.* 'Tis all one to them whether Christ be God or a creature, because they are unconcern'd whether he is a Saviour or an enemy. Such as are

2 Tim. iii. 3, 4, 5. *incontinent, fierce, despisers of them that are good, that have* scarce *a form of godliness*, but certainly *deny the power thereof; lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.* Whom would you resemble in your latter end, those that live in pride, and die in darkness, or such as walk humbly with their God, and go off rejoycing in hope of his glory? *Remember*

Heb. xiii. 7. *those that have taught you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.*

4. Beg the divine teachings; don't despise His admonitions who has promis'd to *guide our feet.* I fear the naming of this direction in these terms will be a disadvantage to it: and as our age are more afraid of *Enthusiasm* than of *Atheism*, they do not like some phrases that the Scripture has us'd.

If

If that's the case, till he who *convinces the world of sin*, even of their *unbelief*, does his office, and tries his power, 'tis in vain for us to argue; we call after the winds, press the rocks, and court the waves. SERM. LXI.

But I hope there may be some among you, who tho' you have doubts, yet you don't despise him who alone can give you the victory. You may be sure, on which side soever the truth lies, 'tis upon no other ground than the testimony of the Spirit in Scripture, and with no other evidence than the testimony of the Spirit to Scripture; and therefore it's no begging the question to send you to your knees. Whatever party laughs at this, and makes a jest of the witness that's given in answer to humble prayer, they are either opposite to the truth, or unworthy of it. Pray that the *God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.* Eph. i. 16, 17.

II. I would address myself to those that are convinc'd of this doctrine. If these sermons have been bless'd to the opening of your eyes, or the settling of your faith, you and I have reason to be thankful for 'em. I would hope there is one argument, that these labours are not altogether in vain, because tho' the continuance of this subject has been unexpected, and by me I am sure undesign'd, yet they were always deliver'd to very great assemblies. And notwithstanding the curiosity there is in our nature to be entertain'd with variety, yet I have not observ'd any abatement of your numbers, or your zeal to receive the love of the truth.

The uneasiness of some who could either be *drowsy* upon design, or *angry* without it, has been no farther my trouble than for their sakes. For whether they care for it or no, they have heard

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what in a little time they ſhall feel, that He whom they deſpiſe is God, and *it is hard for them to kick againſt the pricks*. However, theſe examples of ſleepy lolling and diſcontented hearers have been very few. I have had the ſatisfaction to ſee that there are ſome whom the truth of God has not drawn, but it has driven 'em; and as they did not like to hear what they did not love to admire, ſo they were afraid to meet what they could not anſwer.

The inſinuations that this doctrine is *Enthuſiaſm*, and the manner of promoting it too violent, are only deſperate vollies of thoſe that quit the field, who when they are broke for diſputants, ſet up for railers. But to you, my brethren, who have not been aſham'd of Chriſt and his words, in this corrupt and untoward generation, let me apply with theſe two directions,

1. See that you feel in your own ſouls the influence of what you believe. To what purpoſe is *the manifeſtation of a God in the fleſh*, if he who took upon him your nature is not allow'd to have any concern in your happineſs? why is he *juſtified in the Spirit*, if your ſpirits are an exception to that honour? if he there meets with nothing but unbelief, rebellion, and darkneſs? to what purpoſe does the holy Ghoſt give him a teſtimony which you will not receive; but inſtead of that, ſuffer yourſelves to be guided by a reaſon that's vile and cloudy? what a conviction will that be, that he who is *ſeen of Angels*, to be admir'd and ador'd, ſhould not be ſeen by you, ſo as to diſcover any form or comelineſs in him?

Why is he who is *preach'd to the Gentiles* mention'd with any abatement of his character? why muſt not they who are his witneſſes to mankind, own him to be a God? if he is *believ'd on in the world*, what will become of thoſe who in con-

tempt

tempt of these examples *will not come unto him that they may have life?* And what an aggravation will his being *receiv'd into glory* leave upon your refusal, your infidelity and impenitence? Therefore see to it that your experience strikes to this doctrine, that they are both to one key. When you hear of his being God, feel that your faith is employ'd in the deepest adorations, in a continual homage, in all the fervour and duty of life. As he is preach'd to you Gentiles, so endeavour to see, that you're part of the world that believe in him. Follow the glory that he is receiv'd up to, with breathings after it, and a dependence upon him to bring you thither. SERM. LXI.

2. Consider your obligations to *own* what you have believ'd: *Hold forth the word of life, that I may rejoyce in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, nor labour'd in vain. Yea, and if I be offer'd upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoyce with you all; for the same cause also do ye joy and rejoyce with me.* 'Twas a great deal of opposition that Christ went thro' for your sakes, and resolve that you will run all dangers for his. Phil. ii. 16, 17, 18.

Is a God manifest in the flesh, a God lost in that flesh? must his taking upon him *your nature* be an argument why you will not be witnesses to *his?* This condescension is what he design'd both for your happiness and his own glory. Do you pretend to secure the one, and be unconcern'd about the other? 'tis true, he does not want your assistance in another world, nor indeed in this. He that form'd the mouths of men can set the voices of the universe a going. He needs none of your learning, but is able to ordain *strength out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, to still the enemy and the avenger.* Psal. viii. 2.

SERM. LXI. Nevertheless, he puts it to the trial, what you think his honour is worth; whether it is not set at too great a rate, if your reputation is to suffer in the service of this glorious cause. Can you deny those that deny him? 'Twill be impossible to *be-*
Joh. v. 44. *lieve, if you receive honour from one another.* This is given as the reason why *many that believed in Christ, i. e.* were thoroughly convinc'd of his title
xii. 42, and his perfections, yet *did not confess him, because*
43. *they were afraid of being put out of the synagogue, for they lov'd the praise of men more than the praise of God.*

If this is your case; if you think to maintain the honour of Christ, and the favour of those that oppose it, 'tis a desperate attempt; your're striving to do what our dear Lord tells us no man can do, *serve two masters.* This coalescence can succeed but a very little while, for in time you must *hold to the one, and despise the other.* Let me therefore beg
1 Pet. iii. of you, not to be afraid of men, or *fear their re-*
15. *vilings, but sanctifie this Lord of hosts in your souls, and make him to be your fear and your dread.*

This is a courage that may in one sense be said to bear its own charges. The more you use, the more you will have. A man's cowardice begins from himself; 'tis an indulg'd carnality; we make it our crime, and God makes it our judgment. He that fears a Redeemer fears nothing else; he that does not fear him fears every thing. A person who dare not let go the Deity of his Saviour, dare do every thing to promote it. But he that is unconcern'd about that, will be always a burden to himself: fear will be on every side.

'Tis a sweet hazard that you run in this cause, and a glorious infamy that the malice of men has
Phil. i. 29, cloath'd you with: *To them it is an evident token*
30. *of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God:*

to

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to you it is given on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe, but to suffer for his sake. If you suffer the reproach of Christ, which the fearful and unbelieving reckon the greatest mischief in the world, *happy are ye, for the Spirit of God and of glory shall rest upon you. On their part he is evil spoken of, but on your's he is glorified.* 1 Pet. iv. 14.

III. I promis'd to give you some little account of myself, which you know I do not use to trouble you with; nor should I have done it now, were it not in duty to the glorious doctrine for which God has honour'd me both as a witness and a sufferer: *I am not asham'd of the Gospel of Christ.* And *I thank the Lord who has enabled me, counting me faithful, and putting me into the ministry.* Rom. i. 16. 1 Tim. i. 12.

The text I have been now upon is what my thoughts were turn'd to above twenty years ago. And I cannot but regard that hand of Providence that orders all our steps, that I have so long been kept off from engaging in a subject, that gave me many pleasing views at a distance. He that fixes the bounds of our habitation, settles also *the times before appointed*, and he makes every thing *beautiful in its season*. 'Tis by his over-ruling counsel that these designs should never be brought into life till they were most needful.

I must farther observe to you, that we were actually engag'd upon this text above eleven months before our contentions broke out, that are now become like *the bars of a castle*. I little thought at my entrance upon the mystery of godliness, that I should be driven into the field of battel, or that a zeal for those doctrines would make me the abhorrence of friends and the contempt of strangers. But a wise and gracious God had thus

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thus appointed it, to try whether in the service and defence of the truth, we could live upon the *honour that comes from him only*.

'Tis two years and seven months since I begun these sermons. I had no more in view than about ten or twelve discourses; but I have found myself refresh'd and enlarg'd in these studies beyond what I have been conscious to upon any other subject. And therefore, tho' I could not be untouch'd with *the defaming of many*, and especially considering how unexpected and undeserv'd it was, yet the doctrine was so much the joy of my soul, that the ill usage of men is what I could both neglect in the closet, and despise from the pulpit.

I had thought to have insisted only on three or four texts in maintenance of our Lord's Divinity, and I am apt to think they have rather grown to so many hundreds; which I endeavour'd to lay before you, not under the interpretations of men, not as driven in with the authority of councils and synods, but in their own light, *by a manifestation of the truth, commending myself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*

And I do now with the greatest solemnity affirm to you, and appeal to the searcher of hearts, that I have not perverted one Scripture to serve a cause which I did not think the holy Spirit design'd it for. I am sensible some are grown weary of the subject, and are gone out from us, and by these we are charg'd with heat and fury about a needless debate.

If people are angry that the truth is defended, 'tis well if they do not want some concern about its being oppos'd. But I am so sure that this doctrine is of God, and so persuaded that it is fundamental to all your hopes, that I think my work

work and my life can never be clos'd with any thing of more importance. I will therefore conclude with a doxology, that is to be underſtood of Chriſt: *Now to the King eternal, immortal, inviſible, the only wiſe God, be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen.* SERM. LXI. 1 Tim. i. 17.

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Iſa. vi. 1. I ſaw the Lord upon a throne high and lifted up, and his train fill'd the temple. Above it ſtood the Seraphims,—— and cried one to another, Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hoſts, the poſts of the door mov'd, 119, 295, 344, 345, 346, 347, 674.
——— 5. Mine eyes have ſeen the king the Lord of hoſts, 488.
ix. 6. To us a child is born, to us a Son is given, and his name ſhall be called Wonderful, Counſellor, The mighty God, The everlaſting Father, 36, 148, 212, 725.
xl. 6, 7. Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make ſtraight in the deſart a high way for our God; comfort ye my people, ſaith your God, 550, 660, 661.
——— 9. Say to the cities of Judah, behold your God, 375, 408, 496, 662.
xlii. 8. I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory I will not give to another, 563.
xliv. 5. Subſcribe with the hand to the Lord God of *Iſrael*, 851.
xlv. 22. Look unto me, and be ye ſaved all the ends of the earth, for I am the Lord, and there is none elſe: to me every knee ſhall bow, and every tongue ſhall ſwear, 355, 402.
——— 24. In the Lord ſhall one ſay I have righteouſneſs and ſtrength, 270, 702.
l. 2, 3, 4. Is my hand ſhorten'd at all, that I cannot redeem? at my rebuke I dry up the ſea.——The Lord has given me the tongue of the learned.——I gave my back to the ſmiters, 659, 660.
liii. 8. Who ſhall declare his generation? 506.
Jer. ix. 3. They bend their tongue like their bow for lies, and are not valiant for the truth, 29.
xvii. 12. A glorious high throne from the beginning, is the place of our ſanctuary, 84.
xxiii. 6. This is the name whereby he ſhall be call'd, *Jehovah* our righteouſneſs, 180, 269, 405, 507, 857.
xxxiii. 15, 16. She ſhall be call'd the Lord our righteouſneſs, 508.
Dan. ix. 26. The Meſſiah ſhall be cut off, but not for himſelf: he ſhall finiſh tranſgreſſion, make an end of ſin, and bring in an everlaſting righteouſneſs, 179, 507.
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Hag. ii. 9. In this place will I give peace, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, 408.
Zech. xiii. 7. Awake, O ſword, againſt the man that is my fellow, 340, 405.
Mat. i. 18. She was found with child of the holy Ghoſt, 212.
——— 23. His name ſhall be call'd Immanuel God with us, 160.
ii. 2. We have ſeen his ſtar in the eaſt, and are come to worſhip him, 485.

iv. 10. Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve, 456, 519, 689.
v. 44. Bleſs them that curſe you, *&c.* 862.
xi. 6. Bleſſed is he who ſhall not be offended in me, 471.
——— 26. I thank thee, O Father, —— that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes. All theſe things are deliver'd to me of my Father: no man knows who the Son is but the Father, and who the Father is but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him, 431, 432, 650.
xviii. 20. Where two or three are met together in my name, I am in the midſt of 'em, 272, 520, 521, 739.
xix. 17. Why calleſt thou me good, there is none good but one that is God, 454.
xxvii. 46. My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me? 280, 281.
xxviii. 17. They worſhip'd him, but ſome doubted, 488.
——— 19. Baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and holy Ghoſt, 489.
——— 20. I am with you always to the end of the world, 440, 547, 548, 739.
Mar. ii. 10, 11. That ye may know that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive ſins, he ſaith to the ſick of the palſie, ariſe, 574.
——— xii. 10, 11. The ſtone which the builders rejected is made the head of the corner, This is the doing of the Lord, and it is marvellous in our eyes, 422.
xiii. 32. Of that day and hour knows no man, nor the Angels, nor the Son, but the Father, 653, 654, 657.
Luke i. 16. Many of the children of Iſrael ſhall he turn to the Lord their God, and he ſhall go before HIM, 312, 661.
——— 33. Of his kingdom there ſhall be no end, 683.
——— 35. The holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the Higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee; therefore the holy thing that ſhall be born of thee ſhall be called the Son of God, 673, 784.
——— 68. He has viſited and redeem'd his people, 200.
——— 76. Thou child ſhalt be call'd the prophet of the higheſt, and go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his way, 312, 313, 661.
ii. 52. He grew in wiſdom and ſtature, 653.
v. 8. Depart from me, for I am a ſinful man, O Lord, 487, 488.
ix. 26. Whoever ſhall be aſham'd of me and of my words, of him ſhall the Son of man be aſhamed, 358.
xix. 7. He is gone to be a gueſt with a man that is a ſinner, 425.
xxiv. 52. He was parted from them, and they worſhip'd him, 488, 489.
Joh. i. 1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, 680.
——— 3. All things are made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made, 500.
——— 4. In him was life, and that life was the light of men, 511, 558.
——— 10. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, 473, 499.
——— 13, 14. The Word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory (the glory of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth: and to them that receiv'd him gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, 198.
——— 18. Not that any man has ſeen the Father, ſave he that is of God: he has ſeen the Father, 208.
——— 49. Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Iſrael, 487.
ii. 25. He did not commit himſelf to men, becauſe he knew what was in man, 654.
iii. 13. No man has aſcended into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son who is in heaven, 210, 272, 696.
——— 36. Whoever believes not is condemn'd already, the wrath of God abides on him, 174.

iv. 10. If thou kneweſt the gift of God. —— thou wouldſt have ask'd of him, and he would have given thee living water, 21.
v. 18. He ſaid that God was his Father, thereby making himſelf equal with God, 138, 215, 718, 719.
—— 23. That all men may honour the Son, as they honour the Father: he that honours not the Son, honours not the Father who has ſent him, 298, 691, 856.
—— 26. As the Father has life in himſelf, ſo has he given to the Son to have life in himſelf, 514.
vi. 46. He that is of God, has ſeen the Father, 208, 650.
—— 57, 58. As the living Father has ſent me, and I live by the Father, ſo he that eats me ſhall live by me, 720, 721.
—— 65. No man can come unto me, except it were given him of my Father, 721.
—— 68. Thou haſt the words of eternal life, 64, 721.
—— 69. We believe and are ſure that thou art the Chriſt the Son of the living God, 722.
—— 71. Jeſus knew from the beginning who they were that believ'd not, and who ſhould betray him, 654, 655.
viii. 32. Ye ſhall know the truth, and the truth ſhall make you free, 15.
—— 56. Before *Abraham* was, I am, 722.
x. 15. As the Father knows me, I know the Father, I lay down my life for the ſheep, 628.
—— 27. I give to 'em eternal life, 723.
—— 28. My Father is greater than all, and none ſhall pluck 'em out of my Father's hands, 187, 275.
—— 30. I and my Father are one, 150, 187, 723.
—— 31. Believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him, 189, 275.
—— 33. Thou being a man, makeſt thyſelf God, 188, 275.
—— 34. He call'd them Gods to whom the word of God came. Say ye of him whom God has ſanctified and ſent into the world, thou blaſphemeſt, becauſe I ſaid I am the Son of God? 189, 275.
—— 38. I am in the Father, and the Father in me, 20, 276.
xii. 42. Many of the Phariſees believ'd in him, but they did not confeſs him, leſt they ſhould be put out of the ſynagogue, 675.
—— 43. Theſe things ſaid Eſaias when he ſaw his glory, and ſpake of him, 119, 347, 675.
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—— 3. I will come again and receive you to myſelf, that where I am you may be alſo, 528.
—— 6. I am the way, the truth, and the life, 669.
—— 8. If ye had known me, ye ſhould have known my Father alſo, and henceforth ye have known him and ſeen him, 208, 528, 650.
—— 17. My Father is greater than I, 494, 766.
—— 18. Becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo, 272, 482, 518.
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—— 14, 15. He ſhall take of mine, and ſhew it unto you. All that the Father has is mine, therefore I ſaid he ſhall take of mine, 157, 244, 245, 276, 670, 738.
—— 16. Yet a little while, and ye ſee me no more: and again, yet a little while, and ye ſhall ſee me, 517.
—— 22. I will ſee you again, and your heart ſhall rejoice, and your joy ſhall no man take away from you, 481, 482.
—— 30. We are ſure thou knoweſt all things, and needeſt not that any man ſhould ask of thee, 659.
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—— 5. Glorifie

——— 5. Glorifie me with the glory I had with thee before the world was, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641.
——— 10. All mine are thine, and thine are mine, aud I am glorified in them, 411.
——— 23. I in them, and thou in me, 182, 183.
——— 24. I will that they whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, 734, 735, 736.
xviii. 37. For this cauſe came I into the world, that I might bear witneſs of the truth, 19.
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xx. 22. Receive ye the holy Ghoſt, 267
——— 28. My Lord and my God, 541, 790.
——— 31. Believe that Jeſus is the Son of God, and believing have life in his name, 540.
xxi. 17. Thou Lord, knoweſt all things, thou knoweſt that I love thee, 655.
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iii. 15. Ye have kill'd the Prince of life, 575.
iv. 23. They took knowledge of 'em that they had been with Jeſus, 434.
vii. 59. Lord Jeſus receive my Spirit, 125, 158, 526, 527, 529, 530, 738.
ix. 6. Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? 169.
——— 11. Behold he prays, 108.
——— 15. He is a choſen veſſel to bear my name before the Gentiles, 169.
xvii. 11. They receiv'd the word with all readineſs of mind, and ſearch'd the Scriptures daily, whether the things were ſo or no, 11, 12, 97.
——— 23, 24. Him whom ye ignorantly worſhip declare I to you, the God who made the world, 776.
xix. 17. Many that believ'd came and confeſs'd their deeds, 93.
xx. 28. The church of God which he has purchas'd with his blood, 180, 181, 246, 247, 405, 711.
xxii. 24. Be baptized calling on the name of the Lord, 170.
xxvi. 17, 18. I have made thee a miniſter and a witneſs to people, —— from whom I will deliver thee; having therefore obtained help from God, 170, 441, 517.
——— 19. Sanctified by faith in me, 572.
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iii. 4. Let God be true, and every man a liar, 57.
iv. 4, 5. To him who works not, but believes on him that juſtifies the ungodly, to him faith is imputed for righteouſneſs, 477.
——— 24. Who was deliver'd for our offences, and rais'd again for our juſtification, 631.
vi. 3, 4. We are bury'd with him in baptiſm, 68.
viii. 3, 4. What the law could not do in that it was weak in the fleſh, God ſent forth his Son in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, *&c.* 178, 203.
——— 7. The carnal mind is enmity againſt God, and is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, 848.
ix. 4. To them pertain'd the adoption, the glory, the ſervice of God, 77, 161, 383, 384.
——— 5. Over all God bleſſed for ever, 217, 354.
——— 33. I lay in Sion a ſtumbling ſtone, and rock of offence, 723.
x. 4. They ſubmitted not to the righteouſneſs of God, 179.
6, ——— 10. What ſaith the righteouſneſs of faith? the word is nigh thee in thy mouth, and in thy heart: if thou believe with thy heart that Jeſus died, and confeſs with thy Mouth that God rais'd him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſav'd, 85, 550, 551.

xi. 34. Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, and who has been his counſellor? 418.
xiv. 7, 8, 9. No man lives to himſelf, and no man of us dies to himſelf. Whether we live, we live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether therefore we live or die we are the Lord's. For to this end Chriſt both died and roſe again, and reviv'd, that HE might be the Lord both of dead and living, 68, 300, 444, 518, 519, 855.
——— 11, 12. We ſhall all ſtand before the judgment ſeat of CHRIST; for it is written, As I live, ſaith the Lord, every knee ſhall bow to ME, and every tongue ſhall confeſs to GOD; ſo then every one of us ſhall give an account of himſelf to GOD, 356, 702.
xvi. 17. I beſeech you mark them that cauſe diviſions and offences, contrary to the doctrine that ye have heard, and avoid them, 822.
——— 25, 26. The revelation of the myſtery which is manifeſt to all nations, 66.
1 *Cor.* i. 2. Call on the name of the Lord Jeſus both theirs and ours, 300.
——— 17. I will bring to nought the wiſdom of the wiſe, and deſtroy the underſtanding of the prudent. Has not God made fooliſh the wiſdom of this world? 779.
——— 21. Where is the wiſe, where is the ſcribe, where is the diſputer of this world? 433.
1 *Cor.* ii. 2. Not with wiſdom of words, leſt the croſs of Chriſt ſhould be of no effect, 780.
——— 7. We ſpeak the wiſdom of God in a myſtery, which none of the princes of this world knew, 36.
——— 9. Eye has not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor has it enter'd into the heart of man, what God has laid up for them that love him, 40.
——— 12. We have receiv'd not the Spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God, 848.
——— 14. The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs to him, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcern'd, 37, 578.
vi. 19. Ye are not your own, but bought with a price, and therefore glorify God in your ſpirits and bodies which are God's, 444.
x. 29. Do ye provoke the Lord to jealouſie? are ye ſtronger than he? 104.
xii. 3. No man can ſay that Jeſus is Lord, but by the holy Ghoſt, 126, 539, 579.
xiii. 4. Charity ſuffers long, and is kind; envies not, vaunts not itſelf, is not puff'd up. 824.
——— 11. When I was a child, I thought as a child, 36.
——— 13. The greateſt of theſe is charity, 860.
xiv. 9. Except ye utter by the tongue words eaſie to be underſtood, how ſhall it be known what is ſpoken? *&c.* 795.
——— 34. God is among you of a truth, 739.
xv. 24. He ſhall give up the kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all, 682, 683.
2 *Cor.* i. 3, 4. We are comforted of GOD, our conſolation abounds in CHRIST, 516.
ii. 17. We are not as many who corrupt the word of God, 796.
iv. 2. Not walking in craftineſs, or handling the word of the Lord deceitfully, 796.
——— 4. God of this world has blinded their eyes, 551.
——— 4. Chriſt is the image of God, 208, 728.
——— 6. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, 45, 208, 498.
——— 8. We believe therefore we ſpeak, 565.

v. 10. We muſt ſtand before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt, 171.
——— 15. The love of Chriſt conſtrains us, 121, 220, 457, 519.
——— 19. God is in Chriſt Jeſus reconciling the world to himſelf, 64, 65.
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x. 5. Caſting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itſelf againſt the knowledge of God, 554, 555.
xiii. 8. We can do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth, 822.
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iv. 4. When the fulneſs of time came, God ſent forth his Son made of a woman made under the law, 20.
——— 29. He that is born after the fleſh, perſecutes him who is born after the Spirit, 40, 127.
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iii. 4. Ye may underſtand my knowledge in the myſtery of Chriſt, 32.
——— 8, 9. The unſearchable riches of Chriſt; to make all men ſee what is the fellowſhip of the myſtery, 61, 92, 376, 706.
iv. 10. He aſcended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things, 518.
——— 11. He gave ſome Apoſtles, Evangeliſts, Prophets and Teachers, 97.
——— 16. Be not children toſs'd to and fro with every wind of doctrine, 580.
Phil. i. 17. Stand faſt in one ſpirit, with one mind, ſtriving together for the faith of the Goſpel, 822.
ii. 7, 8. He was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, 144, 701, 724.
——— 10. Every knee ſhall bow to Chriſt, and every tongue confeſs that Jeſus is Lord to the glory of God the Father, 354, 355.
iii. 20. We look for a Saviour Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, 248, 558.
——— 21. He ſhall change our vile bodies, ——— according to the power whereby he is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf, 590, 601.
Col. i. 15. The firſt-born of every creature, 589.
——— 16. By him were all things created in heaven and in earth: thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, all are created by him and for him, 342, 454, 686.
Col. i. 19. It pleas'd the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell, 360.
——— 20. By him to reconcile all things, 709.
——— 26. The riches of the glory of this myſtery, 23.
ii. 2. That our hearts may be comforted, being knit together to the riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding, to the acknowledgment of the myſtery of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt, 122.
——— 3. In him are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge, 654.
——— 10. Complete in him who is the head of all principality and power, 491.
——— 19. Increaſe with the increaſe of God, 512.
1 *Theſ.* ii. 5. As we are allow'd of God to be put in truſt with the Goſpel, even ſo we ſpeak, not as pleaſing men, but God who ſearches the hearts, 451, 452, 565.
2 *Theſ.* ii. 11. He gave 'em up to ſtrong deluſions to believe a lye, 60.
iii. 2. That I may be deliver'd from wicked and unreaſonable men, for all men have not faith, 548, 770.
1 *Tim.* i. 17. The King eternal, immortal, inviſible, the only wiſe God, 46, 648.
vi. 10. The love of money is the root of all evil, which whilſt ſome have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, 825.
——— 15, 16. Keep the commandments to the coming of Jeſus Chriſt, who in his own times ſhall ſhew that he has immortality, and dwells in light, 207, 649, 650, 657.
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——— 21, 22. Avoid oppoſition of ſcience falſly ſo call'd, which ſome profeſſing have err'd from the faith, 780, 801.
2 *Tim.* i. 12. I know in whom I have believ'd, and am perſuaded that he is able to keep what I have committed to him, 124, 125, 156, 658.
ii. 13. He abides faithful, he cannot deny himſelf, 671.
——— 16. They increaſe unto more ungodlineſs, 59.
——— 16, 17. Their words do eat as a canker; if a man purge himſelf from theſe, he ſhall be a veſſel of honour, 824.
——— 25. In meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves, if peradventure God may give 'em repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, 822, 823.
iii. 13. Evil men and ſeducers ſhall wax worſe and worſe, deceiving, and being deceiv'd, 60.
iv. 3, 4. The time will come that they will not endure ſound doctrine, but after their own luſts ſhall heap to themſelves teachers, having itching ears, and they ſhall turn away from the truth, and be turned to fables, 59.
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——— 15. To the unbelieving nothing is pure, but their mind and conſcience are defiled, 38.
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——— 14. Looking for the glorious appearance of our great God and Saviour, 561.
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——— 2. By whom he made the worlds, 711, 729.
——— 3. Being the brightneſs of his glory, and the image of his perſon, upholding all things by the word of his power, 270, 271, 506, 711, 728.
——— 4. He by himſelf purged away our ſins, 712.
——— 6. Let all the Angels of God worſhip him, 136, 138, 139, 321, 334, 642, 730.
——— 7. He makes his Angels ſpirits, 311, 340.
——— 8. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, 341, 691.
——— 9. God, even thy God has anointed thee, 341.
——— 11, 12. Thou, Lord, haſt laid the foundations of the earth, 680.
——— 14. Are they not all miniſtring ſpirits ſent forth to miniſter to the heirs of ſalvation? 328, 329.
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——— 5. He has not to the Angels put in ſubjection the world to come, 443.
——— 8. He was made lower than the Angels 351.
——— 11. He that ſanctifies, and they who are ſanctified, are all of one, 556.
——— 14, 15. As the Children were partakers of fleſh and blood, he took part of the ſame, that thro' death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, 209, 272, 280, 589.
iii. 2. *Moſes* was faithful, as a ſervant in all his houſe, 501.
——— 3. This man was counted worthy of more honour than *Moſes*, 502, 503.
——— 4. Inaſmuch as he who builded the houſe has more honour than the houſe, 503.
——— 8. An evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God, 504.
——— 16. Whoſe houſe we are, if we hold faſt the confidence of our hope to the end, 173, 174.
iv. 14. Let us hold faſt our profeſſion, 696.
——— 15. He was in all things tempted as we are, 200.
——— 16. Come with boldneſs to the throne of grace, 117.
vi. 18. By two immutable things in which it is impoſſible for God to lye, we have ſtrong conſolation, 13.
vii. 24. Becauſe he continues for ever, he has an unchangeable prieſthood, 713.

——— 25. He is able to save to the uttermost, 491.
ix. 17. *Moses* sprinkled the book, *&c.* 505.
——— 23. The heavenly things are purged with better sacrifices, 506.
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FINIS.

The first nine sermons are so uncorrect, that the sense in many places is quite lost: the other part of the book was put into better hands, I therefore desire the reader will please to amend these Errata.

PAGE 4. Line 10. for *want* read *wanting*. p. 7. l. 30. for *their* r. *thine*. p. 11. l. 33. for *man* r. *men*. p. 14. l. 26. for *the* r. *they*. p. 26. l. 4. for 1 *Cor.* r. 2 *Cor.* p. 50. l. 13. for *loose* r. *lose*. p. 64. l. 18. for *those* r. *these*. p. 67. l. 35. for *and* r. *that*. p. 71. l. 1. for *that* r. *those*. p. 77. l. 17. for v. r. ix. p. 82. l. 24. for *warought* r. *wrought*. p. 83. l. 35. r. *second*. p. 36. r. *come*. p. 37. r. *a new*. p. 39. r. *decrys*. p. 89. l. 4. for 2 *Ep.* r. *Eph.* p. 91. l. 3. for *the* r. *their*. p. 97. l. 28. for vi. r. iv. p. 105. l. 16. for *working* r. *washing*. p. 107. l. 1. for *try* r. *cry*. l. 24. for *of* r. *for*. p. 108. l. 35. dele *braveness*. p. 109. l. 30. for *of* r. *off*. p. 110. l. 20. for *imputed* r. *imparted*. p. 111. l. 20. for xcviii. r. xviii. p. 112. l. 19. for *a* r. *an*. p. 125. l. 13. for viii. r. vii. l. 14. for xi, r. xii. p. 127. l. 23. after *Rule* dele *period*. p. 155. l. 11. for *then* r. *they*. p. 164. l. 9. for *as* r. *them*. p. 165. l. 18, for *nature* r. *author*, l, 35. for *then* r. *there*. p. 201. l. 12. after *as* r. *the*. p. 206. l. 15. for 1. r. I. p. 224. l. 17. for *of* r. *the*. p. 325. l. 12. for *these* r. *those*. p. 358. l. 3. for *came* r. *come*. p. 398. l. 23. for *it is that* r. *that it is thus*. p. 540. l. 34. for *glory* r. *story*. p. 581. l. 2. for *that* r. *then*. p. 637. l. 26. for *in* r. *into*. p. 642. l. 24. for *which* r. *whom*. p. 656. l. 14. for *to* r. *of*. p. 660. *penult* for *heur* r. *bear*. p. 672. l. 16. for *We* r. *He*. p. 688. *penult* for *that* r. *tho'*. p. 727. l. 27. for ὀρισθεὶς r. ὁρισθεὶς. p. 752. l. 5. for *Samosatinians* r. *Samosatenians*. p. 761. l. 14. before *must* r. (1.) p. 777. l. 27. for *nothing* r. *none*. p. 781. l. 27. for *these* r. *those*. p. 832. *penult*. for *about* r. *above*.